RUSSIA AFTER FOUR YEARS OF REVOLUTION

by

S. S. MASLOFF.

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Translated by A. G. Paschkoff.

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PARIS
SOCIÉTÉ DE PRESSE, DE PUBLICITÉ ET D'ÉDITIONS
22, rue d'Anjou

1923

Pamph. HRus. M.

Printed by « Franco-Russian Press », 216, Bd Raspail, Paris.

PUBLISHERS' NOTE.

In his impartial survey of the actual moral and material state of Russia, S. Masloff, the author of this book, throws a lurid light on the disastrous results of the attempt to realise extreme socialist theories on a grand scale.

A lecturer in the university of Petrograd and an active collaborator in the Russian Co-operative movement, the author is well qualified for the task he has undertaken. His former connexion with some of the leading men in the Bolshevist government has enabled him to witness and note many features of the ghastly reality that are unknown to the public.

The extreme interest and importance of the book have prompted us to offer it to the English speaking public, although we disclaim any responsibility for the opinions and conclusions of the author. The English translation is considerably condensed as compared with the Russian, French and Czech editions, and both parts of the book have been compressed into one volume to suit the taste of English readers.

S. Masloff fled from the «Socialist Paradise» at the end of 1921. Since then, the ravages and consequences of the Great Famine may have wrought some changes in the mental attitude of the population — the rhythm of Russian life is so violently rapid that no book on Russia can be entirely up to date at the present time — but, in the main, the conditions depicted by the author still remain unaltered.

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GLOSSARY

Berkovets.	Measure of weight = 361.1 lbs.
Chresvichaika or Che-Ka.	«Extraordinary Commission for combating counter-revolution, speculation etc». introduced by the Bolshevics. The executive power of the Che-Ka gradually became practically unlimited, and at present it may be considered as one of the principle organisations of the Bolshevic rule.
Copeck.	1/100 of a rouble ; about 1 farthing= ½ cent.
Desiatina.	Land measure = 2.7 acres.
Economitcheskaia Jizn.	Economic life, official economic paper of the bolshevic government.
Government.	Sometimes used as meaning Administrative District or Province.
Intelligentsia.	Educated classes (see Chapter 2, part II).
Izvestia.	The official journal of the Soviets. The word means «record, news, information», and is often used as the name of a newspaper.
October revolution.	In October 1917 the Bolshevics put out of power the Temporary, or so-called «Kerensky» Government, and took the government of the country into their own hands.
Pre-October period.	The period between the fall of the Monarchy in March 1917 and the Revolution in October of the same year.

Pogrom.	Massacres of the Jews, chiefly in S. W. Russia and Poland. These were frequent in 1903-1906, and are now occurring almost continually.
Poud or pood.	Measure of weight = 36.11 lbs.
Rouble.	In pre-war times equal to 52 cents, or just over two shillings; in July 1922 about 6,000,000 roubles equal one dollar.
Sajen.	Measure of length = 7 feet.
Samovar.	Kind off tea-kettle.
Sovdep or Soviet.	The actual ruling organisation in Russia at the present time.
Stanitsa.	Cossack villages in S. and S. E. Russia.
Stepp.	Vast uncultivated plains in S. and S. E. Russia.
Versta.	Measure of length = 0.66 miles.
Zemstvo.	System of Russian local self-government.
Zolotnik.	Measure of weight = 0.01 lbs.

PREFACE.

The purpose of this book is to give a short and objective account of the consequences of phenomena that have taken place in Russian public life during the last four years. It is an attempt to sum up the inheritance bequeathed by the recent past to the unknown future.

In accordance with the twofold aspect of the phenomena in progress during Russia's second period of «Troubled Times», (1) these consequences can be divided into the two groups of objectively sociological and psycho-social events. Under the former heading may be classed those recent events that have dislocated the structure and life of the community; under the latter those that have modified the collective soul of the people.

The first group of phenomena has led to results that are obvious and tangible; as a rule these results can be expressed in numerical idioms and depicted with exactitude in numbers.

The consequences of the second group are less definite. Statistics can only be used in exceptional cases as an illustration

(1) The period between 1600 and 1613 is known in Russian history as. «Troubled Times». (Translator's note).

to them; to give them expression, descriptive methods have to be resorted to in this book. With a view to conveying a clearer impression the present state of the nation's collective soul will be contrasted with that of its pre-revolutionary past; to make the description more convincing the forces that have wrought the change will be indicated.

The psycho-social displacements in Russia are enormous, far reaching and diverse. They are enormous both in numbers and in possible results, and far reaching inasmuch as they have affected all the classes of the community and all the adult population; it would be difficult to find a province of the soul untouched by the great storm that has stirred up the human ocean of Russia to its very depths.

The outstanding feature in the life of the nation's collective soul in the course of the last four years has been incessant excitement. Turbulent and unstable conditions of life have continually brought the population face to face with new ideas, moods and impressions, and a completely unsettled state of mind has ensued.

The soul of the nation was being remoulded. Waves of revolutionary events ceaselessly washed away and destroyed the previous psychic formations deposited during the period of Russia's comparatively peaceful and stable existence.

In spring-time, when in flood, a Russian river boisterously carries away its banks and shallows and lays a new bed for itself; when the flood has abated, the river's channel must be studied afresh. Simultaneously with destruction the torrent creates and deposits; millions of minute particles of earth and sand in the muddy waters build up new islands and banks.

In the same way deposits have settled in the Russian soul. It has acquired new traits; some impressions have faded, some are intensified, fresh experiences are accumulated, others are dead.

In investigating the objectively-sociological processes the following subjects will claim our attention: (1) Population; its numbers, its geographical migrations, its distribution between town and country, its social structure; (2) National Economics as a whole and in its main component factors of industry, transport and agriculture; (3) The State, political and economic aspects; (4) Culture; (5) Internal Political Activity.

Of the psycho-social phenomena some are common to all classes, others are peculiar to each individual social group of the community. Among these groups I draw special attention to the communist party, the intelligentsia, the peasants, the working class, students, and the army.

The boundary line between the two groups of phenomena is theoretically obvious. In practice however, in the actual occurrences of life, it is no more visible than the trail in the wake of an airship. And in some instances this boundary line is uncertain and difficult to trace even theoretically. Internal political activity is an illustration of the case: it depends to such an extent on psycho-social phenomena, on the opinions and moods of the population, and the two questions are so closely interwoven, that I prefer to treat it under the psycho-social heading, regardless of the risk of infringing on the general plan of this work.

Anyone interested in Russia knows, or at least has had the opportunity of becoming familiar with, her external aspect. Russia's economic and financial aspect, the movements of her population, her political structure, her educational system both in school and out of it — these have been treated in numerous books and newspaper articles. But until now no attempt has been made to portray the new collective soul of the Russian people. No one has yet endeavoured to sum up the psycho-social consequences of the recent stormy years as has been done in the

sphere of economics. And yet the former are by far the more important matters in regard to a knowledge of Russia and the forecast of her immediate future. If the soul of the nation is alive and unbroken by the storm, ten years will suffice for Russia to make good her material and cultural losses; with a certain effort, the former unity of the Russian commonwealth will be re-established and its political power rebuilt. But the soul of the population must be in the fit condition, for if the terrible blows of the last years have crushed the national spirit, if the power of perception is lost and despair has set in, Russia is doomed — doomed to hopeless decay, disruption and non-existence. In the life of a nation psychic assets weigh and mean more than any economic wealth.

The effects of the Revolution on the economics of the commonwealth are dealt with in the first part, and even in this sphere I hope to be able to furnish the reader with novel information and with hitherto unconsidered conclusions.

The second part of this book is devoted to a discussion of the spiritual gains and losses of the Russian people.

The data that form the basis of this book were collected in Russia; they were set down on paper, beginning from the end of the year 1920, and in this form carried abroad. As compared with the edition of this book in other languages (Russian, French and Czech) the English translation is abbreviated by approximately one third.

RUSSIA AFTER FOUR YEARS OF REVOLUTION.

PART I.

THE CONSEQUENCES OF OBJECTIVELY-SOCIOLOGICAL CHANGES IN RUSSIA.

I.

POPULATION.

The numerical status of population. — According to the most exhaustive census ever carried out in Russia — that of 1897 — the population (minus Finland) equalled 125,640,012 persons. 100 or 102 millions were then distributed within the boundaries of modern Soviet Russia. Towards the end of 1920 the population of this area had reached 130.7 millions and thus, in spite of the terrible losses in the Great War and in the civil fighting, in spite of mortality caused by famine and epidemics, regardless of the fact that considerable territories with their populations had been ceded to Roumania, Esthonia, Lithuania, Latvia and Poland, the commonwealth had not only maintained the strength of its population, but had even increased it. In the last 23 years the population of Russia has increased by 28% or 30%.

Nevertheless, if we consider the movement of the population during the past four years, the aspect changes completely; during this period the population has diminished rapidly.

The returns of the Commissariat for Health show that in 1919 the death-rate stood at 74.9 per thousand inhabitants (as compared with 25.4 in 1917) and the birth-rate only 13 per thousand (as against 39.4 in 1917). The information supplied by the Economic section of the Russian Union of Finance, Industry and Commerce (in Paris), based on officially published soviet returns, indicates that during three years of soviet rule 90 towns and the rural area of 22 provinces in European Russia, with a population of 30 millions in 1917, had, at the close of 1920, lost 2250 thousand, or 7.5% of their inhabitants.

Both in towns and villages, although in different proportions, the population is dying out.

Mortality is higher in the cities. A summary of the statistical office in the town of Orel gives 2061 births and 4042 deaths in 1919, and 1375 and 3912 respectively for 1920. The death-rate increases progressively; in 1919 it is 196% of the birth-rate, in 1920—285%.

The state of affairs in Petrograd is even more appalling. The birth- and death-rates to every thousand inhabitants for the recent years are given in the following table:

	Births	Deaths	% of Deaths to Births	Increase or decrease per 10,000
1912	27.6	22.6	82%	+ 5
1913	26.4	21.4	81%	+ 5
1914	25.0	21.5	86%	+ 3
1915	22.5	22.8	101%	— 0.3
1916	19.1	23.3	121%	— 4.1
1917	16.0	25.2	157%	— 9.2
1918	15.5	43.7	282%	— 28.2
1919	15.5	81.5	527%	— 66.2

The pre-war death-rate stands below the birth-rate. At the opening of hostilities the former begins to grow, and in the year

preceding the revolution deaths outnumber births, but the difference is not great (21%, or 4.1 per thousand of the entire population). With the Revolution the increase in the death-rate is accelerated, and by the third year attains monstrous figures, unheard of in demographical statistics: the mortality rises to 527% of the birth-rate; i. e. for every thousand inhabitants deaths outnumber births by 66.2 (in the single year of 1919 Petrograd lost 1/15th of its population). During the first four months of 1920 the death-rate grows even higher and reaches 90 to every thousand inhabitants.

I have been enabled to check the fluctuations in the numbers of the population for the last four years in twelve of the former provinces. The results are as follows:

	Total popul.	Rural	Urban
1916	25,195,978	18,416,496	6,779,483
1920	22,226,518	18,375,031	3,851,487
Decrease	2,969,460	41,465	2,927,995

It will be noticed that in four years the depopulation had attained nearly three millions, or 11.8%.

For the whole of Russia the depopulation is less rapid. The region to which the above figures refer forms a centre of developed industry, townships and boroughs, and is consequently densely populated (1); in addition to this, eight of the provinces checked belong to the consuming class. Both of these factors tend to make depopulation for this area more rapid than for the rest of Russia, for the towns are dying out faster than the villages and the population migrates from the consuming provinces to the producing ones.

(1) In 1897 the urban population for the whole of Russia was 12.9% of the total. In the area mentioned it equalled 19.2%.

According to the returns of the Economic Section of the Russian Union of Finance, Industry and Commerce, already quoted, it will be correct to estimate the natural decrease of the population due to the preponderance of deaths over births at 2% or 2.5% for an average year. In the pre-war period the contrary obtained, and the natural yearly increase amounted to 1.35% as given by some estimates, or to 1.7 according to others.

The depopulation of the villages is usually assigned to the effect of sweeping epidemics and to dearth of medical attendance and drugs. This is to some extent correct. Statistics of spotted and recurrant typhus for European Russia (minus the Ukraine, Don, Kuban and the Caucasus) given by the Commissariat for Health are:

	Spotted Typhus	Recur. Typhus
July 1st 1918 to July 1st 1919...	1,365,000	48,000
July 1st 1919 to July 1st 1920...	2,516,000	585,000
Total for two years....	3,881,000	633,000

The total number of typhus cases for two years is 4,414,000 and the epidemic is obviously spreading: 1,413,000 patients in the first year rise to 3,101,000 in the second. The mortality is appalling. In the terrible winter of 1919-1920, when the epidemic was at its height, the dead were conveyed to the Rogojsky cemetery by the train-load, and the corpses were stacked in trucks like timber. A virulent form of dysentery that raged during the summer and autumn of 1919, small-pox, influenza and cholera must be added to the list, and consequently infectious diseases must be considered one of the chief factors of depopulation in the villages.

The devastation caused by epidemics was augmented by the criminal lack of medical assistance. The former efficient

system of a comparatively dense net of medical stations with dispensaries and hospitals no longer exists. Neither doctors, nurses nor drugs are available. Existing hospitals are insufficiently supplied with soap for laundry use; even the important medical institutes of Moscow suffer from an acute shortage of thermometers. The principal ward of the Moscow hospital in which I lay in 1919 did not possess a single one.

But however disastrous the effects of epidemics on the population, the ravages of famine are worse. The relentlessly cruel and insane soviet policy in the matter of food supplies paved the way for it. In numerous instances the peasants' corn-bins were cleared of their last particle of grain by armed government detachments entrusted with the levy of food-stuffs. Such action was held to be justified by the assumption that the peasants held reserves of corn concealed in their fields and under-ground. In 1920 and 1921 the food tax was thus assessed and collected in the provinces of Toula, Kursk, Riazan, Tsaritzin, those districts of Tambov where the population had not rebelled, Orenburg and Saratov. Some of the districts were visited three and four times and the peasants' husbandry irreparably ruined. In the winter of 1920-1921 the population of those provinces was living on acorns, saw-dust, birch and lime bark, clay, oilcake, pigweed, bran, chaff and leaves; in the spring, young shoots of trees, sorrel and similar substances were used for food.

The following table gives the official statistics of nutrition published in 1921 by the All-Russian Statistical Congress in Moscow.

Daily Ration of the Rural Population in calories:

	Prov. of Toula	Prov. of Saratov
November 1920	2300 calories	2540 calories
February 1921	1500 »	1700 »

A labourer's normal nourishment contains from 4000 to 4500 calories a day, whereas the rural population in the regions referred to subsisted on roughly a third of this amount. The famine

was so intense that even soviet authorities were unable to shut their eyes to the fact, and in the spring of 1921 free kitchens were opened for the relief of the population in the provinces mentioned above, but this relief proved hopelessly inadequate to cope with the situation. And yet Toula and Saratov were the leading provinces in the matter of the assessment and collection of the food-tax. According to official reports they were even «exemplary», as the first had contributed 108% of the assessment and the second 105%.

The miserable population suffered indeed heavily for the honour of being «exemplary».

If to famine, epidemics and lack of medical assistance we add shortage of raiment and boots, insufficient fuel for keeping the houses warm in severe Russian winters with catarrhal diseases as a result, and civil war and popular revolts followed by mass executions of peasants, the aggregate of these agencies is entirely sufficient to cause an inevitable decrease in the rural population of Russia.

As long as the communist government, responsible for the ghastly conditions now throttling Russia, remains in power, depopulation will inevitably continue. This decrease will become more rapid, for industry is perishing in a bottomless quagmire; The consumption of capital in the shape of buildings, implements and live stock is undermining agriculture; raw materials, accumulated in the past, are nearly exhausted; housing accomodation is decaying; transport is becoming impossible, and loss of life through continual peasant revolts against bolshevik authority will not cease.

Geographical migrations. — Migrations from one part of the country to another form the outstanding feature of Russian history. «Russia's history is the history of her colonisa-

tion». V. O. Kluchevsky, the historian, regarded this process as the prime factor of Russia's historical past. At the present time these migrations have grown in volume. The main cause of this is to be found in the growing famine of the last three years that reached enormous proportions in 1921: over 30,000,000 people are now in its merciless grip, no less than 5,000,000 are doomed to death by starvation.

Driven by famine, the population is leaving its homesteads, abandoning farms and husbandry and flying to districts where, according to information, bread is obtainable and starvation can be avoided. Populous villages have lost their inhabitants: millions have migrated; fertile regions are turned into deserts. I am in a position to give the number of authorised emigrations from the Novosil district of the province of Toula that was devastated in 1920 by a ferocious government food campaign. The returns of the district «Sovdep» show that in 1920 35,000 permits for emigration into non-famine areas were issued. As to unauthorised movements, their extent is unknown, but certainly it is a large one. Of the district population of 156,000, at the lowest estimate 50,000, or one third, emigrated. The issue for November 1920 of the soviet government's daily the «Economicheskaya Jizn» runs as follows: «This summer found us within boundaries of pre-revolutionary Russia. The Ukraine, Don and Siberia are liberated, and as in former days the population of central Russia has started a mass movement to the free lands and food supplies of our border territories. This first became noticeable when the crops failed. In April of the current year the emigration from the central producing provinces to the Ukraine grew to enormous proportions. The emigrants travel in families by rail and horse conveyances; entire villages from the provinces of Orel, Toula and Kursk are on the move; in four days 6000 persons passed through the Harkov railway station. The further

development of this migration threatens to become a national calamity».

The failure of the harvest in 1921 gave further impetus to the movement. The soviet press stated that 15% of the population, or approximately 350,000 persons, had left the province of Saratov; 400,000 people had abandoned their homesteads in the province of Kazan. The fertile area on the Volga (Saratov province) colonised by Germans, was desolate. I received information from friends who were agricultural advisers in the provinces of Saratov and Samara to the effect that regions larger than Belgium were doomed to resemble deserts with small cultivated oases scattered over them and uncultivated steppes replacing tilled fields.

That «Migrating Russia» («Russia on wheels») which in former days had its source in the consuming provinces, began, in 1921, to flow in a broad stream from the producing regions as well. Areas cultivated for many years now lie barren and will have to be colonised afresh.

The hardships and intolerable conditions of travel increase the mortality amongst the emigrants; land lies fallow; transport becomes more and more disorganised; abandoned property falls into ruin; relations between emigrants and local population lead to bloodshed.

To help the reader to grasp the immensity of the human masses now moving over Russia in various directions, we must compare them to the migrations of former years. In the fifteen years from 1885 to 1900 only 1,208,000 inhabitants from the 50 provinces of European Russia left their homes and settled in new areas, whereas now, during the last year, two provinces alone have supplied 750,000 emigrants.

When Russia once more finds her feet and recovers from the terrible malady that threatens her very existence, the distribu-

tion of the population on the great plains of Eastern Europe and Western Asia will be a different one.

The Russia of the future cannot resume her previous aspect, as the fundamental factor in the life of the commonwealth, i. e. the numbers and distribution of the population, will have changed. and a new Russia will consequently come into being.

Distribution between town and country. — In the period between the years 1897 and 1916 the number of inhabitants of the towns increased relatively to the rest of the population as well as in absolute figures. In 1897 the city population of European Russia was equal to 12% of the total; in 1916 this proportion grew to 17.5%. According to my calculations the urban population in twelve provinces amounted in 1897 to 3,993,998, in 1916 to 6,779,482 and in 1920 to 3,851,487. During the last four years the city population has diminished by 2,927,925 persons. It is less than it was in 1897. Russia has receded in population to a point where she stood more than a quarter of a century ago.

In Petrograd the depopulation is especially great. By the census of 1917 the inhabitants numbered 2,420,000; by that of 1920 only 705,000 were in residence; the depopulation equalled 1,715,000, or 70.9%. In 1869 the population of Petrograd (668,000) was only slightly inferior to that of 1920. Four years of revolution have annulled the expansion and growth of the 47 years preceding.

The urban population is dying out and seeking refuge in the country and its qualitative standard is deteriorating. As always happens, active, self-relying and adaptable elements are the first to migrate, whilst the more passive section of the community, loath to break with the habitual routine of life, remains despite the risk. The large relative increase in the number of

women in cities is an illustration of the fact. Whereas in 1897 the proportion was 134.5 men to every hundred women, the census of 1920 (for the towns of twelve provinces) gives only 83.5 men to 100 women (1).

The absorption of a certain proportion of the male element of the population by the army does not explain this difference. In Moscow, with a better food supply than any other town, the figures for 1920 were 104.7 women to 100 men, whereas in Petrograd, although the famine was more acute and emigration more developed, the proportion stood at 138.5 women to 100 men. (2).

The urban population will go on decreasing for a lengthy period. The destruction and ruin of a large percentage of buildings in the towns will prove an unsurmountable barrier to the rapid reconstruction of the cities. Wooden houses are pulled down for fuel, «dropsy» is causing their roofs to cave in, and the buildings are doomed to ruin for want of repairs and owing to the lack of care on the part of irresponsible tenants.

The number of habitable flats in Moscow in 1918 was 231,435; in 1920 it had dwindled to 189.907. In the course of two years 41,548, or nearly 18% of the habitations have been destroyed. In 1918,6975, and in 1920, 15,703, were vacant and uninhabitable through having been dismantled for fuel and for the purpose of procuring material for the construction of primitive stoves. The number of flats unfit for habitation in Moscow had increased by 8,728. Two years of soviet régime have been sufficient to diminish the housing accomodation of Moscow alone by 22% or 50,303 flats. If the bolsheviks remain masters of the situation

1) The actual figures for the towns of the twelve provinces are 2,090,458 women and 1,748,444 men.

2) For Moscow the census figures of 1920 are: 526,078 women and 502,140 men; for Petrograd 409,970 women and 295,938 men.

for another 9 years, no housing accomodation will be left and a heap of building refuse will take the place of Moscow.

The state of houses as yet suitable for habitation, i. e. where ceilings have not caved in and which are not dismantled, is shocking. In reference to this the «Izvestia» for November 1920 supply the following information: in Moscow, of 3462 houses, furnished with central heating, 2370 are unserviceable; in 2142 cases the boilers and generators of the heating system are unfit for use. It was ascertained during the week of «Compression» (1) that of 9000 rooms 75% were uninhabitable, and of 800 flats 80% stood in need of capital repairs.

The conditions in Petrograd are no better; of 600 houses inspected in the spring of 1921, 133 or 22% were declared unsafe. Water-pipes and drains are out of order, and in consequence the basements are flooded with water and sewage. Petrograd, with a population of 700,000, is daily supplied with 67.5 million gallons of water, or 97 gallons per head. The supply is now greater than in 1916 when the population was treble its present number. The leakage in the pipes allows the water to percolate into the ground at the rate of 45 or 50 million gallons a day; the ground becomes saturated and unable to support the weight of the buildings. In several instances, in Petrograd, houses have already collapsed and buried the inhabitants under their ruins.

Moscow also suffers from «dropsy».

Numerical fluctuations in the rural population are not so great. In the provinces referred to, the depopulation equalled 41,485 or 0.2%; the decrease is smaller than in the towns. The sponge-like faculty of the villages, that easily absorbed the influx from the cities, to a great extent compensated for the losses they sustained. In August 1920, 82.7% of the total population

(1) A week appointed by the government for requisitioning rooms with the object of putting in supplementary lodgers.

in twelve provinces was distributed among the villages; for the rest of Russia the percentage was even higher and attained 83.7%.

Contrary to what has taken place in the cities, the relative proportion of the male element has grown in the villages: in 1920 there were 77 men to every 100 women as compared with 73.6 in 1916.

The official returns for the population of 22 provinces give even a higher estimate of this increase. In 1917 the scale stood at 72.8 men to 100 women, in 1920 the relative figures were 78.4 to 100. These changes allow us to affirm that the qualitative level of the rural population has consequently risen. It has risen not merely because the male element is the more developed and active of the two, but it is also due to the account of the men who have returned from the army, from campaigns in Poland, Galicia and East-Prussia, and from captivity as prisoners of war. Their intellectual horizons have become broader than those of the population that never left its home; under the influence of experiences and ideas acquired in foreign campaigns, in German and Austrian prison camps, their minds have broken loose from their habitual attitude of calm laziness and conservative routine. The process of thought has awakened, conceptions and ideas of former days are modified. The mental attitude of the men is more alive and perceptive than when they left home. And finally, as a general rule, the population returning to the villages is in the prime of life: the average age is about 30, the age at which the peasant acquires a personality.

The new distribution of the population between town and country chiefly shifts the centre of gravity of social preponderance from the cities to the villages. The unavoidable nature of this process will become even more evident after the changes in the social structure of the Russian population have been examined.

Social structure of the population. — The population of Russia before the Revolution was divided into the following main social groups: landowners, the bourgeoisie, the intelligentzia (in the sense of persons employed in intellectual professions), the proletariat and the peasants. The forms and substance of Russian social life were in the main determined by the private interests, features, antagonisms and co-operation of these groups. The events of the last four years have wrought drastic changes in their social standing and specific gravity. The class of squire landowners has vanished and cannot reappear. Extreme reaction, bearing on its banners the motto of re-establishment of squire landowners, is bound to be defeated. It is obvious to any one who is at all able to analyse social phenomena that no state coercion will ever force the land from the grasp of the peasant, and consequently the most influential class of the past, the class that stood at the helm of the ship of state, has vanished, as it seems to us, for ever from Russian life.

Civil war, fires, time, and the economic policy of the soviets, have impaired the material wealth of the bourgeoisie, and its influence has decreased, its ranks have dwindled and its cohesion is weakened. But despite this, the position of the bourgeoisie cannot be compared to that of the landowners, for the bourgeoisie has a future before it. The creative functions of this social group have only recently been put into motion and its part in national life has just commenced. It has a future in store. But its time has not yet come. The intellectual and social penury of the new bourgeoisie that has come into existence renders its social weight insignificant and in no way equivalent to that of its predecessor, the bourgeois class of the monarchist régime.

The intelligentzia has also lost in social importance; a large percentage has perished and its numbers are depleted. Terror, unbearable material conditions, losses, broken hopes and internal

crises have stunned the surviving remnant; but this remnant is still alive and its social influence is not only felt in the present but will be in the future. Nevertheless, in Russia to-day, owing to numerical and psychic weakness, to lack of political organisation and press facilities, to obstacles in the way of meetings and intercourse, the former significance of the intelligentzia has undoubtedly diminished.

The aspect of the proletariat has altered. In the name of Marx and his doctrine, it is ruined and dispersed. Of the 9.2 millions that its ranks boasted of in 1897, 4,775,000 — half of that number — now remain. Socially the class standard has deteriorated: the skilled artisan who is the impersonation of the pride, honour, interests and special traits of his class is vanishing like chaff before the wind. He perished in civil war, (to quote Lenin's leaflet on the food tax, the civil war of 1918-1920 caused especially heavy losses to the proletariat), because of famine and epidemics, he migrates to the villages, turns to agriculture and becomes a peasant. The skilled labour now employed in Russian industry does not exceed 25% or 30% of its former volume. The most frequent complaint of practical industrial leaders in Russia of to-day is the shortage of skilled labour. The place of the latter — vacant through death and migration — has been filled by a fresh element of a different and poorer type, less energetic and intelligent, less capable of organised common action. The proletariat has profoundly degenerated and its social weight has correspondingly decreased.

The peasants have retained their vitality to a far greater extent than any other class. As already shown, their numbers have remained on the same level; peasant husbandry, although considerably ravaged, still exists; the devastations in agriculture are by no means as heavy as in the case of other industries. The peasants retain their former organisation in the shape of communal village landowning, the cillage and parish moots. On

account of the influx of townspeople, of prisoners of war and men from the army, the qualitative standard of the rural population has risen. It is not as greatly terrorized as the other classes, for even the monstrously developed soviet apparatus of terror is insufficient to encompass and paralyse the rural population to the same extent as it has stunned the cities. During the war and revolution the intellectual outlook of the peasants has broadened and their activity has developed.

The more impressionable intelligentzia has been deeply affected and in many instances crushed by the revolutionary events of the last four years, whereas the effect on the primitive and elementary psychics of the peasant has been rather that of a stimulant.

The peasants are the only class that has gained as well as lost in the recent years. And if there is room for differences of opinion as to the final scale of absolute losses and gains the benefits of the peasant class, due to the disappearance, decay and weakness of the other social groups, are both extensive and beyond doubt. The peasant is at present the prominent figure in the arena of Russian social life, his specific gravity is undeniable and has no counterpoise.

The dim near future of Russia lies concealed in the sphinx-like soul of the Russian peasant.

II.

ECONOMICS.

General aspect of economics. — The twentieth century, up to the war of 1914, was marked by a rapid development in the sphere of national economics. The national income, which in 1900 equalled 6,579,633 thousand roubles for 50 provinces, attained 11,805,545 thousands by 1913. The increase was 5,225,912 thousand or 79.4%.

The following table gives in thousands of roubles the different items of which it was composed:

	1900	1913	Increase
Agriculture	2,985,067	5,660,227	88.5%
Forest and Fisheries	626,167	729,978	16.6%
Industry	1,402,191	2,566,594	83.0%
Transport	531,222	1,055,103	98.9%
Building Trade	473,100	842,668	78.1%
Commerce	561,886	980,975	74.6%
Total	6,479,633	11,805,545	79.4%

The causes of this rapid increase lie both in the growth of the volume of the nations' productive efforts and in the general rise in prices which is the outstanding feature of the 20th century. If, in order to ascertain the net increase of productive effort, the effect of the rise in prices is eliminated, in other words, if the prices of 1900 are applied to the production of 1913, the na-

tional income will amount to 9,170,298 thousand roubles. Thus the growth in the capacity of production equals 39.4%, or 2,590,665 thousand roubles as compared with 1900. In all the spheres of national economics, agriculture, industry, transport, building trade, and commerce, a rise in the volume of production has taken place. The only exception is the Forests and Fisheries; considering a 16.6% rise in prices, the output of these industries has diminished by 4.3%.

This rapid advance in economic development was checked by the outbreak of hostilities and in most branches of production a decline set in; on the other hand some of the more important industries were not affected by the depression and their output in 1916 reached a record volume. In 1913 the average monthly output of the most important coal region of Russia, the Don coal-fields, was 128 million pouds. In 1916 it attained 146 millions. In the flax growing trade the 3,133 thousand pouds production in 1913 rose to 4,260 thousand in 1916. The production of zinc, tin, and wool, and also the chemical and electro-generating industries developed during the war.

With the commencement of the Great War, agriculture entered a period of decline; live stocks decreased, the area under cultivation diminished; a shortage in the implements of production, building materials etc. made itself felt. But even in such conditions the capacity of expansion was not exhausted and the agricultural census of 1916 demonstrated an extraordinary high percentage of young cattle. In 47 provinces of European Russia the peasants' herds consisted of 19,051 thousand full-grown cows, oxen and bulls, and 17,535 thousand heads of young cattle; thus the latter amounted to 92.4% of the number of adult animals. Although the effects of the war were undeniably very detrimental, agriculture was activel creating sufficiently plentiful reserves to effectively counterbalance the losses sustained in the principal branch of farming, namely stock raising.

The decline in national economics that began with the commencement of the war, was neither general nor irreparable. Revolutionary upheavals, however, and especially the rabidly insane economic policy of soviet authorities, altered the whole aspect of the situation; national economics entered a period of rapid and uninterrupted decline, and this process is still in operation.

In the beginning of 1921 the communists attempted to affirm that production in Russia equalled 30% or 35% of its pre-war volume. The falseness of this statement was summarily proved: even the optimistic reports of the central statistic bureau of the soviet government show that the production of Russian industries is one eighth and the output of agriculture one half of what they were in pre-war days. Granting the validity of the above official statement, and taking into consideration that the efficiency of contemporary transport is 5 times less than in 1913 (1) that building activities are non-existent and trade is a quarter of its former volume; that the output of forestry and fisheries has decreased by one half (2) the sum total of the national income will equal 31.5% of the figures for 1913.

Yet even this deduction is too optimistic. As will be seen further, agriculture, the main factor in Russian economics, has deteriorated to a greater extent and its output has fallen to, at most, two-fifths or 40%; industry is one tenth of what it was; trade has lost more than three quarters of its volume. In these

(1) In 1913 the daily average volume of railway traffic was 164,000 poudo-versts. In 1920 it was 35,000 p.-v., or 21%. The same applies to water transport: 2,882 million pouds were shifted in 1912 and only 20% of that, or 583 millions, in 1920.

(2) During the food campaign of 1919-1920 the soviet government requisitioned all available supplies of fish; in spite of this measure, only 7 million pouds were collected, whereas in 1913 the fisheries of European Russia alone supplied 45.5 million pouds, or 6.5 times the quantity.

conditions it is doubtful whether the present national income attains more than 26% of its pre-war total. The country that was never rich is now four times poorer.

The destruction of buildings (works, warehouses, trade premises, railway buildings and dwelling houses); the wear and tear of implements of production; a large decrease in live stocks; deterioration of the soil (caused by bad methods of agriculture, deficient manuring, and weeds); poor quality of seeds; deplorable conditions of railway and water transport; complete destruction of forests in areas where timber was scarce (central and southern provinces); orchards cut down for fuel; a marked decline in the efficiency of labour, the shortage of skilled labour and so on, have yet to be taken into consideration, and the vastness of the ravages caused to the economic apparatus of the commonwealth will then become apparent. The magnitude of the destruction has not merely suppressed the economic activities of the present, but has made a return to normal conditions in the near future problematical.

This short and incomplete survey of the loss and ruin in the sphere of economics makes it obvious that even the ludicrously small national income given above is economically of a false nature; the country is consuming wealth created in the past and the income is no income, but the nation's accumulated capital. The bolsheviks have attained the height of proficiency in the art of destruction, for not only is present Russia ruined, but her future welfare is compromised as well.

One more circumstance claims attention. The quota of the national income which is attributed to industry is not a result of soviet activity: these profits are due to the remnants of former «bourgeois» conditions in Russia. The authoritative evidence of Rykov, chairman of the Supreme Council of National Economics, runs as follows: «In 1918 and partly in 1919 we existed on goods produced by the bourgeois régime; in 1919 and 1920

we consumed remaining raw materials and semi-manufactured goods. Beginning from the year 1920 we were compelled to produce them ourselves». I may add that the fact of economic bankruptcy was conclusively established during this last period and became especially apparent in the early months of 1921, when the «New Economic Policy» of the soviets was introduced with flourishes and advertisment. Extensive peasant revolts of 1921 and the Kronstadt rebellion which took place in March of the same year hastened the introduction of this «new policy».

Having thus outlined the general aspect of national economics, we will pass on to a more detailed investigation of the conditions prevailing in the three main branches of production, namely: industry, transport and agriculture.

Industry. — I have at my disposal statistics of production for a period from 4 to 8 years for 22 Russian industries engaged in upon a large scale. Not only is there no sign of growth or development in the latter years, but there is not a single instance in which even the process of decay has been effectually checked. Year after year every branch of industry, with one exception only, sinks deeper into a bottomless abyss and is in its death throes. The output of pig-iron, this main product of Russian industry, has fallen from 257,398,000 pouds in 1913 to 6,133,000 in 1920, i. e. to 2.4% of its former volume. In 1913 the production was 60 pouds per head of the population. In 1920 it stood at 2 pouds per head. In this respect communist Russia has set up a unique world record — and by no means the only one in contemporary Russia.

The following table is based on official soviet information and furnishes a summary appreciation of the activities of communist «captains of industry»: (1)

(1) Nearly all the figures in the table apply to the same industrial areas in different years.

Industries	PRODUCTION (mostly in pouds)				Production of 1920 compared with that of	
	1913	1916	1919	1920	1913	1916
1) Iron ore	581,357	?	?	9,420	2.25	?
2) Copper ore	68,199	?	?	229	0.6%	?
3) Mangan. ore [1]	17,377	?	?	395	2.6%	?
4) Coal [2]	1,640,900	1,894,000	?	381,800	23.3%	20.4%
5) Naphtha	554,900	602,100	?	230,100 [3]	41.4%	38.2%
6) Gold	3.71	3.76	?	0.097	2.6%	2.6%
7) Platinum [4]	0.30	0.29%	0.007	—	7.6%	7.9%
8) Salt	118,843	?	?	20,962	17.6%	?
9) Pig-iron	257,398	231,866	?	6,133	2.4%	2.6%
10) Flax yarn	3,133	4,280	942	806	25.7%	19%
11) Cotton yarn and coarse stuffs	37,000 [5]	?	2,210	1,555	4.2%	?
12) Acids: sulphuric, nitric, hydrochlr.	17,451 [6]	?	1,729	1,893	10.8%	?
13) Aniline products	500	?	?	24	4.8%	?
14) Matches (cases of)	3,650	3,060	1,008	632	17.3%	20.7%
15) Tobacco wares (cigarettes, cigars, better kinds of tobacco)	21,000	?	7,900	9,500	45.2%	?
(a) cigarette tubes (cases of)	1,000	?	224	74	7.4%	?
(b) Coarse tobacco (in pouds)	3,600	?	1,033	731	20.3%	?
16) Soap	20,183	?	?	790	3.9%	?
17) Paper	9,975	?	?	2,650	22%	?
18) Polygraph. Ind. (numbers of impressions)	?	16,240	3,827	2,488	?	15.3%
19) Sugar	83,531	?	4,737	5,938	6.%	?
20) Starch and Treacle (pouds of potatoes)	60,000	?	5,000	3,500	5.8%	?
21) Electro-generat. Industry	100%	213%	?	15%	15%	7%
22) Rubber Industr.	100%	?	?	5%	5%	?

(1) The Chiatur manganese mines, the richest in the Caucasus, are not included.

(2) The Cheremkhov and Kuznetsk coal-mines are not included.

Only in three of the industries mentioned above, i. e. oil, flax and tobacco, does production exceed 25% of their previous output. It is considerably less in all the other branches. In ten cases it falls below 5%, in four it stands between 5% and 10%, in four between 10% and 20% and in two — from 20% to 25%. The maximum production among the more important industries is given by the oil-fields. The explanation of this is to be found in the circumstance that for a considerable time the oil-fields were outside the sphere of bolshevik rule. They were occupied by bolshevik troops only at the beginning of 1920, and Baku, the most important of the oil regions, as late as in April of the same year. Simultaneously with bolshevist occupation the output of oil began to diminish. The former average monthly production was 19 million pouds; during the first year of bolshevik rule it dwindled to 13 million pouds a month.

The above table draws attention to the marked decline of the mining industries. The production of the six first items attains from 0.6% to 7.6% of the pre-war scale. Before the war these industries were the ones that showed the greatest growth and development in Russian economic life. From 1900 to 1913 their increase in production equalled 84%.

The output of coal is relatively high and stands at 23.3% of its pre-war average. Nevertheless, the decrease caused by bolshevik economics is more intense. During the war, the output grew; in 1920 it fell to 20.4% of «bourgeois» production. The «Economicheskaya Jizn», published by the Supreme Economic Council, states in the reports for 1920, that as regards the Don coal-fields, this year «was a year of unprecedented decline in

(3) The Baku region was occupied by the bolsheviks in April 1920. The production is given for the whole year.
(4) The average output for ten years (1904-1913).
(5) Production of 1910.
(6) The Ukraine, Kuban, Caucasian and Siberian produce not included.

the output of coal, a period of decay of the mines and reorganisation of the industry on new principles». The report expressed the hope that the reorganisation would result in a «victory on the people's economic front». Instead of this the result proved disastrous and in 1921 the output shrank still more. The monthly average for the last three months of 1920 was 28.8 million pouds; if this level had been maintained, the coal production for the first eight months of 1921 would have been 230.4 million pouds; actually it only equalled 170 millions.

Three branches of industry, mentioned on the list, create the impression that decay has ceased, and that production is even developing. As compared with 1919, the output of the tobacco factories, chemical works and sugar-refineries was augmented in 1920. This impression is, however, erroneous: in 1920 the fictitious increase in the output of tobacco factories was achieved by a reduction in the manufacture of cigarettes. In 1919 the latter represented 62.2% of all tobacco goods: in the first half of 1920 they formed 46.8%, and in the second 21.9% of the production.

The falsity of the impression given is even more obvious in the case of the sugar-refineries. In 1919, 7,721 thousand berkovetz (a berkovetz = 10 pouds) of beet were used for the manufacturing of sugar; in 1920 only 4,579 thousand. The increased output of sugar was due to the circumstance that the unrefined brown sugar left over from the previous year had been added to the amount. Only the chemical works show a positive increase of production and 164,000 more pouds of acids were produced in 1920 than in 1919. This is the only «victory» of 1920; it is indeed great when contrasted with the losses in all the other branches of production:

Such are the results of bolshevik «regulation» of Russian industry.

One has to go back very far indeed into Russian economic

history to find a level of production that corresponds to the present one. The linen branch of the textile industry of which Russia had the right to be proud, both as regards the quality and low price of the goods, gives the following example: the production of flax yarn (in thousands of pouds) was 3133 in 1914, 3420 in 1915, 4260 in 1916, 3120 in 1917, 1570 in 1918, 942 in 1919, and 840 in 1920. In 1865, when the flax industry was in its infancy, 806 thousand pouds of yarn were produced. During the last four years in which, as has been recorded, the number of the population and its distribution between towns and villages has fallen back a quarter of a century, the flax industry has suffered a relapse of nearly 50 years.

At various periods and in different regions of Russia some branches of industry have attracted the special and concentrated attention of the central soviet economic institutions. Tremendous efforts were made to increase the production, everything that could be done was attempted and in some instances success seemed probable. Slowly, haltingly, with occasional backward slides the output increased. The «creators of new life» were jubilant, but, alas, not for long. «Some small hitch in the apparatus» would make itself felt and everything would come crashing down like an avalanche of snow. The Don coal-fields offer a brilliant example. 148 million pouds, the monthly average output for 1916, dwindled to 23 millions in 1920. As a result of the strenuous effort that lasted from 7 to 9 months and involved numerous comferences, about 10 committees, and a forced supply of necessary materials, the output of coal for March 1921 was at last raised to 33.1 million pouds. But after that it began to fall again: 30.3 millions in April; 24.3 in May; 18.2 in June, 9.6 in July and finally 11.3 in August. «A miscalculation», as Lenin puts it; but it is the same in everything, everywhere, always — «miscalculations» without respite.

Nevertheless, our «Organisers of the People's Economic Vic-

tories» still thirst for glory. In February 1921 a conference of 15 representatives of Labour Unions for the Exploitation of Timber was held in Moscow. These unions were the only form of co-operative concerns that had not been «nationalised». The reports of representatives from different localities were monotonously similar : directly a union had succeeded in starting a mill or chemical-process timber works, the enterprise would be immediately marked down for «nationalisation». The requisite decision of the government would ensue, and the concern would be added to the «national property». The results were invariably the same — a shortage of raw materials would make itself felt, the workmen would leave, theft become general, the efficiency of labour decrease and so on. A few months of «government regulation management» sufficed for the concern to close. The circuit was completed. The co-operative union would then formulate a request to have the works returned, and if the request were granted, production would be resumed.

Railway transport. — In the pre-war period the Russian railways owned over 20,000 freight and passenger engines, and above 400,000 goods trucks in working order; from 12% to 15% of the engines, 4% of the trucks and 6% of the passenger cars were normally under repair. On the 1st of January 1917 16.5% of the engines were undergoing repairs. Under the soviet régime the percentage of «sick» engines grew disastrously and by the 1st of January 1918 had attained 30.1%. By the 1st of January 1919 the percentage was 47.7% and by 1920, 58%. The number of trucks unfit for service also increased : on the 1st of January 1919 it was 16.6%; on the 1st of Jan. 1920, 19% and on the 1st of April of the same year 23%. The growing paralysis of transport caused the soviet government to resort to special measures, and railways were declared to be «the Storm Sector

of the Economic Front». At the beginning of 1920 the Russian «Carnot» Trotzky was put in command of them and appointed Commissar of Means of Transport.

The new chief commenced his activity by issuing two «operative» orders in which a fixed programme of repairs of engines and rolling stock was laid down for several years. In 3 ½ years the railways were expected to regain their former efficiency.

Work started busily: the soviet official press began to publish reports and statements to the effect that the programme of repairs was being carried out in full, or even exceeded; obsequious government editors showered praises on the «talented orders» and the «genius» of their author. And actually the monthly returns did indeed show a decrease in the numbers of «sick» engines and trucks.

Very soon, however, it became apparent that this was only a case of the usual «eye-wash». As the supply of spare parts was insufficient, engines and trucks in the «cemeteries» (1) of disabled rolling stock were dismantled to procure them. In separate instances 40 «sick» engines were taken to pieces to repair 4 on the line. Thus ostentatious success and prosperity were purchased at the price of irreparable losses. «When the cemeteries are exhausted the whole thing will collapse», was the forecast of sceptical minds.

Events proved the truth of this prophecy.

To the complete surprise of the authorities, a crisis of fuel became apparent in February 1921. Industrial concerns in Petrograd had to be closed, traffic ceased on 10 or 12 thousand versts of railway line. A fresh crisis was «discovered» — in the condition of the railway sleepers; 24 million sleepers needed replacement as they were so rotten that it had become impossible to run trains over them. On the Altai railway peasants extracted the clasp-nails that fixed the rail to the sleeper with their

(1) Used in modern Russia to signify a dump of unserviceable engines and railway stock. (Translator's note).

fingers for the purpose of making teeth for harrows out of them. The supplies of spare parts from the «cemeteries» were soon exhausted and the «Economicheskaya Jizn» signalled another «miscalculation». The best equipped mechanical factories, declared by the government to be «storm-factories», were unable to meet the railways' demands for spare parts. Once more brilliant plans had failed, bright hopes were frustrated, and the percentage of «sick» engines and carriages grew apace.

The following table depicts the condition of the engines: (1)

	Total sum of engines.	Sick engines	% of «sick» engines
June 1920	15,333	8,969	58.5%
December 1920	18,888	10,714	56.7%
June 1921	18,933	11,046	58.4%

In August 1921 the percentage of engines that were unfit for service attained the unprecedented figure of 60.1%. The soviet economic paper issued a statement that «The output of the «storm-factories» had greatly decreased».

The condition of the rolling stock was even more illustrative, as will be seen from the following table:

	Number of trucks		
	Total	Unserviceable	% of «sick»
June 1920	442,985	90,093	20.3%
December 1920	447,394	87,565	19.5%
June 1921	444,043	122,083	27.5%

(1) The reports of soviet authorities in reference to the condition of railway transport vary. I quote the more authoritative figures given in the report of the Transport Commission to the Soviet of Labour and Defence — the supreme economic organ of the Soviet Republic.

It must be added that in contemporary Russia the word «sick» applies to a carriage that is completely unfit for service and cannot be moved, i. e. cars in which the rolling chassis does not function, or the body is entirely destroyed. Missing doors, sides lacking several planks, roof stripped of their sheet iron, are not taken into consideration. Such minor details do not make a carriage «sick»; the greater part of the rolling stock is in such condition. A lengthy search for «suitable» trucks precedes the transport of food-stuffs and perishable goods, easily damaged by rain and snow. In 1921, according to official information, 20,000 trucks of the «first» category, i. e. suitable for the transport of unpacked produce, were available, whereas 60,000 were wanted in autumn to lift the potato harvest. As a consequence of this disparity the stocks of potatoes requisitioned by force from the peasants are, in this current winter of 1921-22, rotting and freezing, as was the case in the previous season.

The condition of the line is also deplorable. Sleepers have decayed and need replacing, but, notwithstanding Russia's extensive timbered regions, sleepers are unobtainable. The metals are worn out; side lines and double tracks are being dismantled to replace them. Nevertheless, reserves procured in this manner are insufficient, traffic is carried on over worn out rails and frequent accidents are the consequence. The «holy» civil war waged on the bourgeoisie by the bolsheviks has destroyed 3,011 railway constructions: bridges, tunnels and viaducts to the extent of 16,000 sajenes, and 1,360 versts of line.

Of the 38,000 telephones and 10,250 telegraph apparatuses in use on the railways at the close of 1920, 32,000 of the former and 8,500 of the latter were in need of general repairs.

Switches, switch mechanisms and lamps are lacking; central signalling-systems are ruined and out of action: even the supply of wooden shovels and screens is insufficient to keep the line clear of snow-drifts. In consequence, in winter, the line

is more frequently blocked by snow and the time required for clearing it has increased. On this account traffic is frequently suspended for weeks on end.

Shortage of fuel is another cause of the interruption of railway communication. During the winter of 1920-21, the journey between Moscow and Petrograd on the Nicolas railway — the most efficient of Russian railways — was usually interrupted by lengthy halts as the trains would have to wait until the neighbouring villages could bring in a supply of freshly cut wood-fuel which would be loaded into the engine directly from the sledges. It can well be doubted whether in any country and at any time railway communications have depended so entirely on the pace of a village cart-horse.

The following figures illustrate the aggregate fuel shortage during the winter of 1920:

	Demand	Supply	Surplus (+) or Shortage (—)
Wood	3,032,815 c.s. [1]	3,094,135 c. s.	+62,700 c.s. or 2.1%
Coal	184,215t.p. [2]	90,720 t.p.	—93,495 p. or 51,9%
Oil	34,058 t.p.	16,955 t.p.	—17,103 p. or 50.2%

If wood is taken as the standard fuel (given that 1 cubic sajene of wood equals 110 pouds of coal or 70 pouds of oil) the total amount required by the railways would be 5,194,040 cubic saj., whereas the supply was 4,161,176 c. s. or 80.1% of the amount. But the estimate of the demand had been drawn up in conformity with the normal standard quality of fuel, whereas the combustible obtainable was of a very poor nature. The wood was unseasoned and even green, the logs were too long for the furnaces; the coal-dust choked the fire-grates (engine-drivers called it fire-proof); the oil contained a large percentage of water. On

(1) Cubic sajenes. (2) Thousands of poods.

these grounds the shortage of fuel must be considered even greater than that given above.

Moreover, part of the fuel supplied to the railways never reached its destination. Large quantities were appropriated by the employees who had no other means of heating their offices and houses.

These reasons caused the expenditure of fuel to be in excess of the estimated amount by 52,524 cub. saj. in October 1920, or by 12%; by 154,059 cub. saj. (35%) in November and by 162,687 cub. saj. (37%) in December.

The inferior quality of the fuel reacted on the speed of railway traffic; as a rule engines travelled at about one-half of their speed in 1917.

As a result of the vicissitudes and difficulties experienced by the railways, the 20,047 engines of 1914 dwindled to 7,450 in September 1921 and instead of 400.000 trucks in perfect condition, 20,000 of the «first» category and 240,000 at all able to run now exist. The condition of the latter is far from satisfactory. According to a report of the Commissar of Transport Emshanov, «the railway work-shops are mostly in ruins, their windows broken, and important parts of the plant missing».

The average volume of transport, as we have seen above, attained only 35,000 poudo-versts in 24 hours, i. e. 21% of the pre-war average. But regardless of such a marked decrease in the traffic, the number of railway employees has been augmented from 905,289 (1915) to 1,338,000 (May 1st 1921). The labour employed on the railways has been increased by approximately 50%, whilst the work has diminished by nearly 80%. If the efficiency of railway employees be gauged by the quantity of goods transported — and I am at a loss to apply any other standard — it will represent 14% of their pre-war capacity and has consequently decreased to less than one-seventh,

As a last feature in the exposition of the state of railway

transport, brought about by four years of soviet «Regulations», I shall add the following fact: during the winter of 1920-21 everyone who had the liberty of choice preferred horse transport for travelling; and that not merely from Toula or Riazan — 90 and 150 versts to Moscow — but also from Ufa, situated at a distance of 1300 versts. Such a mode of travelling was not only faster and safer, but allowed for a more reliable calculation of the time necessary for the journey.

Agriculture cattle breeding. — Russian economists interested in the development of agriculture are of the opinion that the present crisis has affected cattle-breeding and live-stocks to a greater extent than agriculture proper. The peasants' live-stocks — farm, dairy and breeding-cattle alike — have suffered most. As compared with 1917, the estimates drawn up for 13 provinces in 1920 show a decrease of 5.6% in cows and 19% in horses. In sheep-farming and pig-raising the losses are heavier still and attain 42% in the former and 45% in the latter. In regions where sheep-farming was especially developed and where it formed an important source of income, supplying the market with large quantities of meat, wool and skins, the decrease in the number of animals is even more marked. In 1917 the farms of the Orenburg-Turgai region possessed 2,661,942 adult animals; in 1920 1,057,435 were left; the decrease equalled 1,604,507 heads or 60%.

The same applies to pig-raising; in regions where it had a purely commercial basis the losses are heavier than in those where it had a casual aspect. In some of the former regions the number of pigs, according to official reports, «now equalled zero».

In conformity to the general law now operating in Russian economics, the greater the former achievements of man in any given

branch of economic activity, the more rapidly it deteriorates and the heavier are its losses. Thus, the fine-fleeced breeds of sheep have decreased in a far greater proportion than the common animals. Merino-farming, introduced into Russia by Peter the Great, and which boasted 4,447,000 sheep in 1913, numbered a paltry 200,000 at the close of 1920; it had lost 95.5%. Similarly the Russian famous breed of Orlov trotting horses has also become extinct.

The actual conditions prevailing in 1921 are even much worse than the above figures depict. The winter of 1920-21 was especially disastrous for cattle: the bad harvest of hay and grain, together with the ravages of the last and most relentless government food-campaign, brought on an acute shortage of fodder. As a result cattle were slaughtered wholesale and died in masses.

In December 1921, Mourasov, the Director of the Government Studs, stated that «reports are coming in from all parts of the Soviet Republic» to the effect that the horses were perishing. In the provinces of Tambov, Toula, Riazan, the peasants were selling their horses for three boxes of matches and 1 ½ lbs. of salt; lack of fodder was causing the animals to be killed. Horseflesh has now become the most popular food and is consumed both in the cities and in the country. In some villages the number of horses has diminished by 50%, and 30% of the remaining ones have to be suspended by ropes. (1)

The information (supplied mainly by agricultural advisers) that I was able to collect, corroborates the official statements.

In German colonies on the Volga the horses numbered 181,000 in January 1920. By January 1921 85,000 remained; in the spring of 1921 their numbers had decreased to 65.000.

According to the accounts of agricultural advisers from the

(1) A horse exhausted by famine perishes sooner if it lies on the cold ground. To prevent the horse from lying down, the peasants suspend it by ropes to the rafters. (Translator's note).

province of Orenburg, in the early part of 1921 the roads were strewn with carcases of dead animals. As compared with pre-war times the quantity of cattle had diminished by 80%-85%. This decrease was due to horse mobilisations, requisitions, compulsory deliveries of meat, confiscations of fodder and merciless food exactions. By December Ist 1920 1987 horses died through lack of fodder in 57 sub-districts of the province of Cheliabinsk. (1)

As reported by agricultural advisers, 50% of the cows and horses perished in the government of Kalouga during the winter of 1920-21, and in the spring of 1921 only 30%, as compared with 1916, remained in the province of Riazan. Advisers of the agricultural district of Livny in the province of Orel estimated in February 1921 that there was now one cow to seven homesteads, and one horse to every ten. In three villages of two hundred homesteads each in the Chern district of the province of Toula, during the autumn and part of the winter of 1920-1921, the number of horses fell from 252 to 62; or by 75%.

The effects of the bad hay-harvest and of the food-tax were aggravated by compulsory horse-transport service that gave the peasants «neither rest nor breathing space» in regions adjacent to railways or municipalities. In his official returns, the Commissar for Labour Schmidt gives the time spent by the peasants on compulsory transport duties as 70-80 days a year in some regions. Coupled with the acute fodder shortage, these heavy transport duties caused the peasant to kill or dispose of his horse and retain his cow in preference; it was just possible that the compulsory meat-delivery might not include an only cow, whereas the owner of one horse would certainly be called up for transport service.

The combined effects of all these causes on the number of horses are given by Professor Pridorogin in the second half of

(1). Formerly a district of the province of Orenburg.

1921: according to his estimates, European Russia possesses 12 million horses, whereas, according to the horse census of 1916, the number of horses in the territories of contemporary European Russia equalled 21 millions; 9 millions, or 43% have perished. The reader may therefore not be surprised to hear that in many provinces in 1920 and 1921 women were harnessed to the plough.

The agricultural adviser Drosdov thus sums up the positon in reference to meat cattle: in 1913 the meat produce of Russia (minus the Ukraine and Turkestan) equalled 75 million pouds; in 1921 it was only 25 millions, or one-third.

Parallel to this the amount of wool, hides, skins, bristle, hoof, horn etc. put on the market by peasant husbandry has fallen to a negligable quantity and foreign trade in these articles is out of the question.

The existing conditions of live-stock farming are especially affected by the losses amongst young animals. Contrary to what was noticeable during the first years of the war, the number of young cattle is decreasing on a greater scale than that of mature animals. According to my computation, based on official soviet information, the following table illustrates the depletion of live stocks:

	Decrease in period of 3 years (1917-1920)		
	Total cattle	Young	Adult.
Horses	19%	31%	16.6%
Horned cattle	5.6%	66.4%	+21.7%
Sheep	42%	79.5%	32%
Pigs	45%	47%	40%

Consequently the number of young animals is decreasing at a greater rate than that of the old ones. In the case of horned cattle, the entire loss falls on the young animals; there is even an increase in full-grown herds. This state of things is a serious menace for the future, as the absence of young cattle makes a rapid replenishment of the herds impossible and lengthens the period of time required for the reconstruction of Russian agriculture.

Another circumstance aggravates the unfavourable conditions caused by the decrease of stocks of young cattle. Among the innumerable crises from which Russia is suffering and that are being continually «discovered» by «scientific» economic bolshevist institutes, a crisis in bulls also exists. Bulls, not being able to justify their existence by producing milk like a cow, furnishing motive power like a horse or yielding wool like a sheep, were the first to be slaughtered. In 1916 there were 2.6 bulls to 100 brood cows; 1.28 in 1917 and 0.62 in 1920: i.e. at most one-third of the requisite number. In conjunction with this 60% of the cows were barren.

At the close of 1920, heifers and young bulls of one year and over constituted only 10.3% of the cattle — a quantity hardly sufficient to maintain the strength of the existing herds and totally inadequate to form a surplus. The basic vitality of peasant husbandry, up to 1917 undamaged by the war, was completely undermined towards the end of 1920. Since then, stock raising has experienced the disastrous effects of the terrible winter of 1920-1921, whilst the present winter of 1921-1922, with conditions even more dreadful, is still in progress. The state of cattle-breeding in contemporary Russia is indescribable, and it is no exaggeration to affirm that in regions where man and beast are passing through a second famine winter, the foundations of Russian agricultural husbandry, i.e. stock raising, have perished,

and that consequently motive power, meat, wool, milk and manure have also vanished (1).

Agriculture proper. — We will now pass on to the other main aspect of agriculture, that is cultivation of the fields. Taking into account the conditions of live stock depicted above, the decline of the second branch of agriculture becomes self-evident, for the various activities of farming form a single indivisible system and the crippling of one branch invariably leads to the disorganisation of the other. The decrease in stocks of cattle and consequently in motive power has had the inevitable effect of diminishing the area under cultivation. The scarcity of manure due to the same cause has lowered the quantity and the quality of the harvests. Even greater were the effects of the decline in the intensity of industrial enterprise and initiative, due to the government's policy, and this must be regarded as one of the main factors responsible for the regress of national economy in Russia. A heavy shortage of agricultural tools and machines, the poor quality and insufficiency of seeds, uncertainty of land tenure, were the other factors that brought about the decline of agriculture proper.

With the outbreak of the war of 1914 the supply of agricultu-

(1) Cattle breeding in Turkestan is in the same condition as in those regions that are passing through a second famine winter. The following figures depict the extent of the disaster:

	1915	Winter of 1921	Decrease	
Horses	2,291,000	494,000	1,797,000	78.4%
Cattle	2,420,000	864,000	1,556,000	64.3%
Sheep	19,370,000	4,323,000	15,047,000	77.4%
Total	24,081,000	5,681,000	18,400,000	76.4%

ral machinery and implements began to fall rapidly. Imports from abroad diminished, whilst the Russian factories were for the most part turned into munition works. A scarcity of implements made itself felt as early as 1915 and 1916. Under the soviet régime, the general disorganisation of economic activity and industry caused the supply of agricultural machinery to sink to a disastrous level. The following table contrasts the quantity of machinery used in agriculture before the Great War with the amount available during three and a half years of soviet rule (up to May 1st 1920):

	Pre-War Demand	Demand for 3½ years	Supply	% of demand satisfied
Ploughs	750,000	2,625,000	359,500	13.7%
Harrows	126,000	441,000	41,000	9.3%
Sowing machines	55,000	192,500	7,000	3.6%
Reaping »	200,000	700,000	34,700	5.6%
Threshing »	37,000	129,500	4,800	3.7%
Winnowing and sorting machines	53,000	185,500	9,700	5.3%
Scythes and sickles	7-8 mill.	24.5 to 28 mill.	6-7 mill.	27.3-24%

The discrepancy between demand and supply is very great and, according to the different items, varies from 72.7% to 96.3%. It is great even if a 25% decrease of the population, due to the formation of the new border states, is taken into consideration.

Under present conditions the resources of each individual peasant farm are insufficient to keep it in existence; only too frequently a peasant who owns a horse lacks a plough or a harrow — or vice versa — and so on. In contemporary village life the system of mutual aid has developed to hitherto unprecedented dimensions, and united effort and activity are now resorted to. In some cases this mutual help bears a sporadic cha-

racter, as occasion may require, but in others it reaches an organised level, when the land of the village commune is tilled in common and labour is united into agricultural associations.

As in the case of every form of supply, the distribution of seeds has been monopolised by the state, and it became incumbent on the latter to provide seeds of good quality, suited to local climatic conditions, and to issue them at the proper season. None of these conditions were observed in practice: seeds were collected with a total disregard to their nature and qualities, and were distributed regardless of the season of the year. Ludicrous occurrences took place in this connexion — seed oats would be issued in May when the sowing season was over, not unfrequently sun-flower seeds proved to be roasted ones (1); the province of Moscow was supplied with maize for sowing purposes notwithstanding the fact that maize cannot grow in that region. Cases are known in the Volga provinces where millet groats have been issued in the place of millet seed, the members of the District Agricultural Department holding the opinion that millet groats would sprout as well as seeds. Frequently the seeds distributed would be sterile and the peasants' labour would be wasted; in almost all cases the quantity issued was insufficient; in some parts of the Saratov province, in 1921, the ration of seed-millet was a thimbleful per farm, so negligeable was the amount available for distribution.

An official report on the subject runs as follows: «Potatoes collected by the Provincial Food Committee are dumped in one heap... as a result the various kinds of potatoes are mixed up together. In addition seed-potatoes are transported from the south and distributed amongst the northern and central provin-

(1) Russian peasants consume tremendous quantities of sunflower seeds instead of nuts ; these seeds are generally roasted. (Translator's note).

ces... in these circumstances, the harvest is either negligably small or perishes entirely owing to the different climatic conditions and propensities of the soil. Any kind of potato is used for planting provided there be enough of it». This, however was not the case. The demand for potatoes made on the soviet government in 1921 equalled 63 million pouds, whereas only 11.25 millions were allotted for distribution and no more than 9.5 millions were actually available. According to the statement of the Commissar for Agriculture Ossinsky «the condition of the potatoes is such that half of them will be of no good by planting-time».

In 1921 agriculture was visited by a fresh calamity; «State Regulation of Agriculture» was introduced. Every province had a definite area scheduled out for compulsory cultivation and the proportion of the various products was fixed. The provincial authorities distributed the task amongst the districts, the latter allotted its share to each sub-district, which divided it among the villages and, lastly, the quantity of land each farmer was compelled to cultivate, as well as the produce to be cultivated, was fixed by the village commune.

The consequences of the new scheme might possibly not have been so disastrous, as, apart from an increase of red tape, official correspondence and separate instances of tyranny, it would have achieved nothing. But, unfortunately, the new decree was coupled with a measure known as «Protection of Seeds». As the government mistrusted the population and considered it capable of consuming the seeds for food, the grain allotted for sowing purposes was, as the case might be, taken from the peasants and stored in common corn-bins, put under seal on the farm premises, or merely checked and the owner forbidden to consume it under pain of heavy penalties. This «protection» was supposed to be followed by «redistribution» and every peasant was to be equally provided with seed. The actuality, however, proved

vastly different. Accomodation adapted for common storage was non-existent; cellars of former alcohol-distilleries, damp warehouses, barns with leaking roofs and damaged walls were used for the purpose — and the seeds rotted. To escape this new calamity the peasants in their turn took to concealing their seeds wherever they could: in the ground, among straw, and in the straw roofs of their houses. The places of concealment were of such a nature that these seeds also became unfit for use. In consequence, when sowing-time arrived, the stocks of seed had greatly diminished, and the outbreak of the famine now raging in Russia is in no mean degree the result of this «regulation» of agriculture.

The conditions prevailing in agriculture that are depicted above bore their inevitable fruit: the area of cultivation diminished, the volume of the harvests decreased, the methods of agriculture deteriorated, and the production of industrial plants, such as flax, cotton and beet, fell.

According to official returns the area under cultivation at the close of 1920 within the boundaries of soviet Russia was 60,968,000 desiatins (1), whereas, in 1916, 81,272,000 desiat. were under cultivation. The decrease thus equals 25%. The figures for 1920 are not based on the data of the census for this year but are the result of the conclusions arrived at by the Chief of the Central Statistical Bureau, Popov. Being a communist, Popov is infected with an incurable tendency to embellish the actualities of soviet life, and the decrease in the acreage under cultivation is in reality greater. In 1916 and 1917 the cultivated area was diminished by 2.6%, whereas from 1917 to 1920 a fresh decrease of 27% took place in 13 provinces. Thus the total reduction for four years equals 28.9% . The unofficial data supplied by economists estimates the surface cultivated in 1920-21

(1) 1 desiatin = 2.7 acres.

at 65% of that of 1916. A decrease of 6%-7% for the three preceding years of the Great War as indicated by the census of 1916 has yet to be taken into consideration, and consequently the area under cultivation in the spring of 1921 equalled 60% of the surface tilled in 1913-14. The Revolution caused 18.5 million desiatins to lie fallow, and the results of war and revolution combined raise this figure to 35 millions.

Taking 46 pouds as the average return of a desiatin in 1914, by 1921 — as a result of the War and the Revolution — the reduction in the amount of cereals produced attains 1,610 million pouds; 1,310 millions of this diminution is due to the revolution alone.

The average of production per desiatin has also fallen; in accordance with recent statistics, since 1916 a decrease of 15% or 7 pouds per desiatin has taken place, and this cause alone is responsible for a yearly deficiency of 360 million pouds of produce. Thus the total decrease of the nation's wealth caused by the diminished production of cereals in normal harvest conditions would equal 1.670 millions pouds of grain.

Such are the effects of four years of revolution on agriculture, and the resulting loss is nearly three times as great as Russia's yearly export of grain that averaged 592 millions pouds in the five years preceding the Great War.

The cultivation of the more valuable species of agricultural plants decreased to a greater extent than the production of cereals and fodder. The Central Statistical Bureau furnishes the following information in regard to the decrease in acreage of the various forms of agricultural produce:

Food cereals (rye and wheat)	20%
Grain fodder (barley, oats)	27.6%
Potatoes	27.7%
Flax, hemp, cotton, sugar beet etc	46.4%
Sown grass	78.9%

Russian economics have regressed to a stage of primitive development and, similarly to what is taking place in all spheres of economic activity, the industrial products of agriculture are deteriorating to a greater extent than those which go to supply the immediate needs of the producer.

It is instructive and significant to ascertain the exact figures of the decrease in the production of industrial plants formerly utilised by Russian industry, and which also served as important items of export. The following table gives the surface of cultivation and the amount of the various products in reference to these plants: (1)

	Cultivation in desiatins	Produce in pouds	Cultivation in desiat.	Produce in pouds	Decrease
	Average for 1910-1914		1920		
Flax	1,033,000	26,000,000	300,000	3,800,000	88.5%
Hemp	548,000	19,350,000	240,000	3,000,000	84.3%
Cotton	460,000	28,214,000	85,000	700.000	97.5%
Sunflower	860,000[1])	46,000,000[2])	60% or 75% decr.		60-75%
Sugar beet	697,000	76,360,000	180,000	4,572,000	94.0%

The decrease in the production of the different items varies from 66.6% to 97.5%. The export of raw material for industry produced by agriculture and of goods manufactured therefrom, amounted in 1913 to the value of 207,620,000 roubles, and represented 15% of the total value of agricultural exports which stood at 1,309,517 rbles. None of those goods are now available for export as their supply is quite inadequate to satisfy even the demand in Russia.

(1) Data for the 3rd and 4th columns of the table are taken from the «Economicheskaya Jizn», 1921.

(2) Data for 1912 and 1914.

The quality of the produce has also deteriorated; sugar beet contains a smaller quantity of sugar, the flax-fibres have become shorter and the methods used in its production more primitive, the length of cotton has decreased, butter is inferior in quality and so forth.

Such are the results of four years of revolution in the sphere of agriculture. As the reader can see for himself, my view of the situation was by no means an exaggerated one, when, in the early pages of this book, I estimated the national income derived from agriculture at 40% of the same for 1913.

Nevertheless, however badly agriculture has suffered, yet in 1920 the destruction was less annihilating here than in the other branches of economic activity and consequently its relative importance in regard to the revenue and material welfare of the nation has grown. Together with the fisheries and forestry, agriculture has risen from 49.7% of the national income in 1913 to 79% in 1920.

Russian agriculture was always to a great extent a peasant's husbandry; large estates contributed only 10.9% to the part of the national income that is derived from agriculture, and 89.1% came from peasant farming. In 1920 the predominance of the latter increased still more; in 32 provinces the peasants owned 97.3% of the land and only 2.7% belonged to soviet government farms, industrial concerns and so on. The present-day national revenue from agricultural sources is almost entirely contributed by the peasants, and consequently 79% of the total productive effort of the nation is due to them, and expresses the growing influence and importance of the peasants from the point of view of national economics.

III.

THE STATE.

The State and the economic life of the population. The part played by the State. — A rough sketch of Russia's losses during the last four years has been given in the first two chapters. These losses are enormous. How can such losses be explained? What forces produced them?. How could a great country allow a small group of men to go on turning it into a cemetery, day after day, during four years?. There is but one answer to these questions: it is the State with its present-day attributes of power that has brought about a process in opposition to the wishes and ideas of almost the entire country. Thanks to this power 600,000 madmen and scoundrels, hated by 65 million adults, hold these 65 millions in their grasp and rule over them in spite of the fact that they are 1 to 110 of the latter, all of whom are their deadly enemies. It is the State that makes 65 million men suffer, fight at every front, see their well-being destroyed, famine loom ahead, their children and dear ones perish; that forces starvation and death upon them and causes them to submit to daily merciless derision and mockery.

Having attained to power with the help of the population, the bolshevist government immediately handcuffed the men who had exalted it. Innumerable and widespread peasant risings were continually being suppressed. The same fate attended the Kronstadt revolt, notwithstanding its favourable island position and

powerful artillery. A general movement of workmen in February 1921 achieved no better result. In 1919 the soldiers refused to fight. In answer, their dead bodies were stacked in heaps in Stary Oskol, Petrograd and Kursk: every tenth or fifth man in a regiment or even in a division was shot—and the soldiers gave in. They could not help it: certain death is more terrible than a merely possible one.

Primus in orbe Deus fecit timor... Fear vanquishes popular wrath and hate. This the government was well aware of and, as we shall see later, did everything to instil fear of the highest tension.

As I have already said, we have before us a striking example of the tremendous power of the state and the men who stand at its helm, who control the guns, machine guns, financial means, telegraph wires, radios, railways, and... who check the ration list. But, simultaneously, we have an equally striking example of the State's complete impotence. Neither its plenitude of power, nor wealth of technical and other resources availed, either to strengthen the commonwealth, or even to arrest the decay that had set in. In their economic policy, the governing group took no heed of the understanding, psychology and interests of the population and, although strong enough to enforce their policy, they proved unable to achieve the desired results. The government could and did create a tolerable army and a strong terroristical apparatus for civil administration: it relied on the same methods to produce a prosperous commonwealth — and complete failure was the result. The economic position of the country declined disastrously.

Let us now check our assertion that the policy of the state is the basic reason of the economic disaster in Russia. Let us consider how this policy reacted on the economics and life of the country, what changes the latter underwent and what resultant shape it took.

The economic programme of the government and the methods of its introduction. — The fundamental principle of the bolsheviks' economic policy is to prevent the exploitation of the proletariat by the bourgeoisie: everyone is to receive the full benefit of his labours. This equality of distribution demanded the abolition of capitalist private property as it enabled the bourgeoisie to oppress the proletariat. Hence the second principle: the abolition of private ownership of the means of production in industry and transport, everything becoming the property of the people. As the State is the only representative of the nation, all the means of production are to be placed in its hands, i. e., they are nationalised. Banking, trade and insurance have to be treated likewise: firstly, because they are in the hands of the bourgeoisie and serve to exploit the proletariat and, secondly, because they are superfluous under the new conditions.

The old anarchical economic system, based on private ownership of the factors of production, on competition and the fluctuations of the market, was to be replaced by a single coherent system, regulated by the governing power in the interest of the former «step-sons of life» — the proletariat.

Such were the fundamental principles of bolshevist economic policy. Let us now examine the methods of their realisation. A number of these methods were already indicated in the very conception of the programme: the bolsheviks came to power with it. The rest were evolved under the influence of circumstances that attended their advent. The first pre-established feature was the revolutionary character of the programme. New conditions of social and economic relations with corresponding civil and legal institutions had to arise, not by a gradual process of growth, but as the result of a daringly revolutionary annihilation of the past and a revolutionary construction of the present. Life in full swing was to be diverted at a sharp angle by the pow-

erful hand of the state and it was to be done in a year, if possible in a month or a week: the sooner the better.

A second feature, also given beforehand and closely connected with the first, was the absolutely unrestrained tactics of violence. «Everything is permitted» was the motto of the day. Civil and other rights, honour, faithfulness to a promise, conscience — all these were useless rags, worthy of destruction. The state alone has every conceivable right and no obligations barring the single one: to realise its principles in life. This unprecedented abuse of power is justified by a very direct and elementary class ideology. A new class came in as the master of life and brought new morals, new ideas, new standards and new spiritual values. The former values belonged to the past inasmuch as they were created by another, hostile class. Such was the sociological justification of the violence committed. But besides that, a political justification was given by the primitive theory of class war, fearlessly and logically reasoned out: the new dominant class, after having fought its way to power, is bound to meet with the desperate resistance of the old ruling class: therefore, to retain the position he has gained, the new master must be provided with unlimited means of defence. His hands must be absolutely free: all previous guarantees must be annulled, old standards discarded: an unlimited dictatorship of the new class must be proclaimed — and the dictatorship of the proletariat was accordingly declared. It received its most definite expression in those paragraphs of the Soviet Constitution under which the bourgeoisie was totally denied the franchise, and the peasants' right of vote curtailed to one fifth of that of the proletariat.

The third predetermined characteristic is the new type of governmental institution in the shape of periodically re-elected soviets of workmen, soldiers' and peasant delegates. As the Soviet Constitution vaguely and elastically puts it, soviet elections proceed «according to the method best adapted to

local conditions». The elections are indirect. Delegates may be recalled at any moment. Their personal immunity is not guaranteed. All these features of the organisation of soviets are characteristic of the new governing system: they give the government a free hand in combing out delegates and openly manipulating elctions. These possibilities have been and are at present utilised by the state to their full extent.

The soviets became the exclusive type of government institutions. The governmental apparatus begins with the town or village soviet and culminates in the All-Russian Conference of Soviets, the final legislative power of the state. Soviets are the only local government institution not merely because the central government wished that it should be so, but because nothing else could be devised under the given conditions.

In this matter we come to deal with the second group of methods applied by the government in realising their principles. As already stated, these methods resulted from the conditions of public life in Russia after the bolsheviks seized supreme power, i. e., the almost complete isolation of the bolsheviks and the consequent total absence of any working apparatus.

A series of circumstances created this void around the new political masters of Russia. The bolsheviks seized the supreme power on the eve of the convocation of the Constituent Assembly by means of the motto, dear to soldiers' hearts, of putting an end to the war and with the anarchical call for an immediate, disorderly confiscation of private estates. They brought a clearly defined economic programme and the methods of its realisation with them. Taken together, this placed almost the whole of the intelligentsia in a definitely hostile position towards the new government. Except extreme social-revolutionists, all political parties and the bulk of the politically neutral intelligentsia were hostile to the bolsheviks.

During the first months following the triumph of the bolsheviks, especially stubborn resistance was shown by the usually most passive element of the intelligentsia — the government officials. They went on strike and refused to have anything to do with the bolsheviks in any of the central government departments. The provincial intelligentsia followed suit and the new government found itself not only politically isolated, but technically helpless as well.

There could therefore be no question of the bolsheviks taking over the government of the country in a systematic, orderly and peaceful fashion. Having seized power by force in the centre, the bolsheviks had to do the same in the provinces. But, as they had not the disposal of sufficient forces in the centre for this, they were compelled to utilise those local elements that sympathised with them, i.e. soldiers of the rear garrisons, workmen and part of the peasantry. The demobilisation of the army increased these local forces. The wave of political sympathy with bolshevism grew, the provinces were finally able to establish a soviet régime without any assistance from Moscow, and not only this, but they were able to maintain it for a considerable period without even communicating with the centre. By levies on the bourgeoisie they obtained financial means and the workmen gave them a local military force (the red guards). By the time the central government had found its feet and developed an administrative apparatus, the local governments were already stable and strong.

As might be expected, these latter had no desire whatever to limit their powers in favour of the central government and any attempt the Moscow government might make to become the de facto central government of Russia. The proud slogan a «Local Autonomy» was then unfurled and upheld by the provinces: for the matter of that, it is as strong to-day.

The first result of the bolshevik coup d'état was thus the creation of powerful and resistant local governments, produced

by the course of events and which became later an inevitable condition and method of bolshevist activity.

The second was the introduction of despotism, as a regular and usual factor, into the life of the state.

The government, suddenly left without an educated class and an experienced working apparatus, did not command any men capable of the arduous and responsible task of replacing the old code of law by a new one. Although later on the new government developed a hastily and badly built administrative apparatus, up to the present day it lacks an educated class it could call its own, i. e. sincere partisans of the «acquisitions» of the October revolution. In framing its new legislation the government found itself intellectually helpless.

As it is impossible to live without written laws new laws had to be published and promulgated, but they were spasmodically drafted by uneducated men, usually in answer to life's acute and pressing demands . They were neither codified nor properly edited. The department concerned would evolve a draft of the law it considered necessary and introduce it directly into the Soviet of People's Commissars who would merely sanction it. This was often done so inopportunely that the official paper, «Izvestia of the All-Russian Executive Committee of the Soviets» was continually publishing amendments to decrees already issued. There have been cases when published decrees were later declared to have been issued «by mistake». I know of a series of cases in which only 3-5 hours elapsed between the conception of a decree and its final promulgation, whilst in one case the decree was worked out in two hours. The vast region of civil and criminal law has been left practically untouched by such decrees. To justify its intellectual poverty, the government took up a negative attitude towards written law and left the creation of a new legislation to the «revolutionary consciousness of the proletariat».

Neither have any laws been worked out to define the competence of local soviets, their rights, duties and relations to the central government. All this was left to chance, correlation of forces and the understanding of local politicians.

There is no legislation to define the sphere and limits of the central government institutions, their internal structure and establishments. Consequently they are perfectly free from any interference of the law in all these matters and have a boundless scope for «self-determination».

This embryonic condition of soviet legislation is especially burdensome to the population, as it does not know what is permitted and what prohibited, is ignorant of its rights, duties and means of legal defence, and consequently completely helpless.

Such a legalised despotism, reigning in the activity of everyone endowed with power in Russia, stands in direct opposition to any idea of statesmanship and brings the country to the verge of anarchy. But in the last method applied by the government, we shall find acts of sheer robbery. The reader may judge for himself.

The government, politically isolated, had arisen in an atmosphere of bitter hatred and had called for a «holy civil war»; quite correctly it expected to meet with desperate resistance and consequently attempted to strengthen itself, as well as to weaken the class it considered a natural and deadly enemy. Strong and numerous supporters could only be found amongst the most ignorant, materially oppressed and wildest elements of the population, so it was these the government backed, whilst the first blow was directed against the well to do class — the inimical bourgeoisie. «Rob the robbers» was the catch-word, novel in form, but in its essence dating from the end of the 18th century and the times of Pugachoff.(1)

(1) Pugachoff — a notorious Ural cossack chief who was at the head of a rebellion in the years 1772-1773 in the Volga and Ural provinces of Eastern Russia; the havoc caused by his bands was nearly as bad as in the present revolution.

The dual result aimed at was achieved: the dregs of society were attracted and the «bourgeoisie» materially weakened. But the first proved, indeed, a doubtful acquisition, for in exciting and encouraging socially unhealthy inclinations and actions in the lowest classes of the population, the government begot future difficulties for itself in the administration of the country. Besides that, sympathies thus acquired could only be temporary ones: they would last whilst there remained something to rob and until the looters themselves experienced the unprofitable consequences of their actions, after which their sympathy was bound to give way to feelings very much the reverse. I do not know whether the government realised the inevitable harvest of the wind they were sowing, but they had no choice at the time. Lenin was compelled to become a Pugachoff. The government was satisfied with the catch-word and the resulting method of administration: they are in use to the present day.

This then was the programme and such the methods of government in Russia during the last four years. To complete the sketch, I shall add a few words about the human material with which the state commenced and carried on its work of reconstruction. I shall give a detailed description of the communist party in the second part of this book and shall therefore only say at present that the human material it consists of contains both base elements and high qualities.

The men who came to power in Russia are narrow minded, uneducated, coarse, completely non-moral, but endowed with strength of will. They are self-confident and welded together by an iron discipline. Their negative qualities enhance the positive ones. Such a group could and did accomplish much. We have examined the result of their activity in the first two chapters, let us now pass on to the inevitable sequence of events that brought Russia to her present position.

The general trend of the economic breakdown. — Nationalisation of industry, when carried out after the method mentioned above, implies the expulsion of owners from their enterprises. This did not daunt the bolsheviks: on the contrary, they considered it a social benefit that the «spiders» should be cast out of their «nets». Results, however, proved that almost all the most valuable initiative and organising national forces vanished with the bourgeosie.

The effect on the industrial life of the country was deplorable. Elective factory councils, consisting almost exclusively of workmen, took over the management of the enterprises. A general lowering of discipline and of productivity of labour instantly commenced, together with a universal disregard of internal regulations and a wholesale pilfering of property. The authority of the former administrative and technical staffs rapidly decreased; the staffs began to leave their posts because their rights were infringed, and their salaries lowered, and because they objected to be involved in the general disintegration. Industrial enterprises were soon left without any responsible management and their productivity declined sharply.

Muscular energy still remained, but its efficiency also diminished inasmuch as the old apparatus of direction and compulsion had disappeared and the newly elected one was incapable of replacing it: the workmen's conception of their new rights grew on a scale that was out of all proportion to the sense of their new duties; the standard of wages fell and together with it the internal incentive to work was weakened.

A continual decline in the volume and output of Russian industry followed.

A further reason for this phenomenon can be adduced: the manufacturing industries were but very intermittently supplied with raw materials, fuel, money, and, later on, rations and clothes. Such interruptions in the flow of supplies were a

consequence of the destruction of the old conditions and relations in so rapid and anarchical a fashion, whilst the formation and operation of the new institutions lagged behind the urgent demands of life. The inefficiency of the personnel of these new institutions, lack of system in the working of the latter, abuse of local independence etc. — all this increased the irregularity of supplies.

The industrial decline of the towns was accompanied by a corresponding shortage of food supplies for the urban population. The relations of these two factors are obvious: the towns lacked commodities that they could exchange against country provisions, and trade with the country ceased. The countryside began a blockade of the towns and this brought about a regular exodus of the urban population to the villages in quest of food.

As the migration was particularly strong amongst the workmen another blow to industry was thus dealt. A general insufficiency of qualified workmen began to be felt, especially as those who remained were continually absent from their posts in search of food. Trade came to a standstill and shortage of supplies grew to famine.

The state of starvation of the towns impelled the government to resort to armed foraging expeditions into the villages with the object of requisitioning provisions. The authorities, feeble and intellectually impotent, at first allowed and later sanctioned these irregular and barbarous requisitions, thus introducing the mad system of the «food-tax».

The «food-tax» killed not only any tendency the peasant may have had to develop his farm, but even any incentive to keep it up to its former standard, and the peasants began to curtail their farms.

Such is the sequence of causes that led to the disintegration of the Russian commonwealth: destruction of industry, weakening of trade with the villages and consequent famine in the

towns: armed expeditions in quest of meat, bread, butter, eggs and so on into the countryside: fall of agriculture and reduction of farms to such dimensions as sufficed for the satisfaction of bare personal needs.

Degeneration of the State. The enslavement of personality. — The disintegration of the commonwealth that I have roughly sketched was acutely felt throughout the whole of the State and led to deep changes. Institutions and their functions were modified, the interrelation of the population and the government became different. The State was being remoulded in its fundamental and normal characteristics.

The economic collapse was accompanied by a decrease of material wealth: the national income fell, as we have seen, to 26% of its previous volume. Neither could the State any longer command the amount of commodities it required: old stocks were being used up, the material worn out, its efficiency destroyed. All this made strict economy necessary and a carefully regulated distribution of public commodities urgent.

The use of telegraph, telephone, parcel post, tramways, railroads was limited. Food, clothing materials, boots and other articles of personal use were next «regulated». Monopolising the right of distribution, the government prohibited the sale of commodities it did not possess, or in which it was poor.

After its own stocks had been exhausted, the government turned to those of private persons and began to lay hold of furniture, books, underclothes, clothing, crockery, bicycles, telephones and so on. In many parts of Russia, matters came to a «regulation» of plates, spoons and glasses, preceded by disorderly searches for provisions. Then lodgings and flats were requisitioned, inhabitants ejected and the furniture attached to the house. It became dangerous in Petrograd to carry a sa-

movar, a chair or a table across the street without a special permit, the risk of being stopped and arrested was too great.

These endless requisitions were not only necessary to satisfy the wants of the government (both central and local) and of the communists, but also to revive the weakening sympathy of the «proletariat». The arbitrary character of the ruling power, and a population totally deprived of all legal or personal rights, facilitated every kind of requisition.

Owing to the impoverishment of the state, the salaries of officials in government institutions were continually falling. In April 1921 the average salary finally reached the sum of 12,000 soviet roubles, or one gold rouble per month. But the price of necessaries of life (fuel, bread, meat, meal, salt, sugar and so on) had risen out of proportion to the rise in the price of gold: in April 1921 they cost 112,583 times more than in 1913. The purchasing power of one golden rouble was therefore equal to that of 9.5 pre-war copecks. The rations issued to soviet employees were worth about 200,000 roubles «free market» value and meant an addition of 180 pre-war copecks to the salary. The salaries of the best paid class of employees never surpassed 1,500,000 roubles, i. e. 12 pre-war roubles. The inadequacy of such a salary not only did away with any incentive to work, but also sapped the strength to fulfil it.

In 1919 the government became aware of the fact that its institutions and factories were short of hands. Only one way out of the difficulty presented itself to the authorities — namely «Compulsory Labour», and we see that in the spring of 1920 the government adopted this measure. According to the government, the «General Compulsory Labour Service» implied not only the «duty of every citizen to work, but the obligation to work in that locality, industry and speciality to which the Department for the Distribution of the Forces of Labour should appoint him». Committees for enforcing the «General Compulsory La-

bour Service» were established in the centre, in provinces and districts, together with committees for the purpose of punishing defaulters. Employees and workmen were thus «fixed» to their posts. The special committee dealt out their task to shirkers.

Eventually a citizen's life was «regulated» on all sides. Even government tailoring workshops were ordered to make clothes after a definite cut, varying fashions being prohibited.

A revolting tendency to enslave the human individuality runs through all the activity of the government. Such a tendency was unavoidable in view of the government's programme. Nevertheless, requisitions of crockery, books, clothes, prohibition of the use of telephones and, in 1920, of the telegraph, expulsion from flats etc. — all this was usually based not on economic, but on political motives. Such proceedings were only possible under the legalised system of despotism and robbery adopted in internal politics and with an administration thoroughly imbued with a profound disregard of all human rights.

Bureaucratic statesmanship. — The process of turning the human personality into an object entirely at the disposal of the government was accompanied by the complete bureaucratisation of the state. A series of causes rendered this inevitable.

The assimilation of national economics by the state invariably leads to an increase in the administrative apparatus of the country. This unavoidable growth of institutions and officials in Russia was further reinforced by the methods adopted to realise the programme of the government. The haste with which old conditions were destroyed led to an equally rapid and therefore badly planned and unsystematical construction of a new administrative apparatus. The low intellectual level of those elements of society who were the supporters of the

new government added to the prevailing chaos. Government departments and institutions, left without precise rules or regulations, allowed for an indefinite increase of officials, whilst the inefficiency of the staff, badly paid and generally working with a clear consciousness of the uselessness of their labours, led to a continual increase of their numbers.(1) The government being suspicious of all educated non-communist employees, political commissars were nominated to control them; and unwieldy, large controlling departments were created to cope with continual evasions of contradictory and vague decrees, with, dishonesty, illegal distribution of stocks, rations, etc., absenteeism, shirking and so on. Next come: the service of political terror — the Extraordinary Commission for Combating Counter-Revolution, or the «Chresvichaika»; after it a succession of special departments for procuring, distributing and punishing «Compulsory Labour Conscripts»; then an endless list of employees engaged in prisons, houses and cellars turned into prisons, and convents turned into concentration camps.

Towards the end of 1920 there were about two million state employees in Russia. In order to properly estimate the full significance of this total it should be compared to the number of officials under the old bureaucratic Russian régime; in 1897 there were 436,000 officials in the entire Russian empire, Fin-

(1) The size of the departments will be seen from the following extract, taken from an official report of Nemansky after he had revised the central department for the Textile Industry: «in four months there have been 59,959 incoming papers and 25,781 outgoing ones. The total of employees was 2,054. Thus to every secretary there were 4 incoming papers and 1.5 outgoing ones per diem; to every assistant secretary 10 incoming and 4 outgoing ones per diem; to every typist 2 outgoing papers; to every office-boy 1 incoming paper and 0.5 outgoing ones.»

The same authority says concerning the work of the slave employees: «....book-keeping is excellently illustrated by the inventory book in which chairs, tables, rent, meal, curds, etc. are all entered indiscriminately.»

land excepted; in 1920 Moscow and Petrograd alone contained 416,000 officials or a quantity almost equalling the grand total for the whole Empire in 1897.

The State did not benefit by such a bureaucratic growth as it involved an appalling amount of «red tape» and mismanagement in the administration. To obtain the necessary papers, any person leaving Moscow on duty had to visit at least 11 to 13 offices and spend from 15-20 hours in walking from one to the other and standing in queues, the proceeding taking from 3-4 days in all. The indent for money of the Northern Cable Works in Petrograd had to pass through seven different government offices and return three times to the works before the money could be received. This is what the Italian, Margrini, says about his visit to Russia: «I bought about 20 photographs at the governmental photographic committee. In order to pay 1,900 roubles for them, I had to spend 2 hours in passing through 3 different offices and I was given 6 receipts for the money».

The great number of institutions with very vague definitions as to their functions led to continual interdepartmental conflicts. Very many questions came within the sphere of several departments whilst there were no departments at all for many others. The Council of National Economics that «regulates» industry is in an especially chaotic condition. The following instance of the Don coal-fields may serve as an illustration of the general confusion. The coal-fields were so important an item for the government, that a certain amount of order might have been expected. And yet a committee of inspection discovered nine different supplying departments that worked simultaneously but without any correlation: (1) the Chief Coal Department, (2) Central Supplying Committee, (3) All-Russian Central Union of Trade-Unions, (4) Industrial Bureau, (5) Ukraine Supply Committee, (6) Special Harkov Committee, (7) Committee under the Supreme Council of National Economics, (8) Special

Committee under the Council for Labour and Defence, (9) Ukraine Council for Labour.

Institutions are continually being abolished, divided or amalgamated, whilst, if any serious difficulty in the economic life of the state arises, new ones spring up in clusters. The instance just quoted is a very typical one.

Especially large are the controlling institutions of the soviet bureaucracy. The communist Larin gives the following estimate in an article entitled «Merry Arithmetic»: the numerically largest departments — the Commissariat of Transport and the Supreme Economical Council (1) — had one controller for two employees in the former and two controllers for every one employee in the latter. All the government departments in Moscow have five controllers to every two administrators. «Communism demands that everything should be checked», asserted Lenin, but his words took on a slightly different meaning in practice — communism demanded, first of all, that everyone should be controlled.

The fateful influence of bureaucracy on economic life was especially noticeable in the organisation of food supplies, where it displayed an extraordinary capacity for mismanagement.

During the winter of 1920-21 in the Kurgan district (formerly of the Tobolsk province and at present belonging to the province of Cheliabinsk), 3 million pouds of potatoes out of the 5 millions that had been requisitioned were allowed to rot. The potatoes brought to Moscow and Petrograd for distribution amongst government employees were so rotten that even starving men refused to take them. During the winter of 1920, 960 truck-loads of potatoes arrived in Petrograd and all the government storehouses were full of them, but the potatoes were of no use to anyone:

(1) The Commissariat of Transport contains 17% and the Supreme Council 17.5% of the total of government employees in Moscow.

according to the «Petrograd Pravda», they had been loaded on to the trucks half-frozen and full of dirt, they froze completely on the way, thawed in Petrograd with the warm weather and became like a mass of soaked apples.

The same thing happened in the case of fish in the Don Province. «The Don Province Fish Committee» produced 250,000 pouds of fish, out of which 150,000 were lost owing to lack of storage and means of transport. In the Don province also (and not only there) pigs, requisitioned from the population, were driven by road and without food for 100-120 versts. The pigs arrived at their destination as lean as whippets. In the government of Poltava, at a large collecting point for requisitioned pigs (village Komyshevaty) no food had been prepared for the several hundred pigs brought there and the pigs began to eat each other. When at last a certain amount of food was obtained it was simply dumped down into the middle of the yard: hundreds of pigs were trampled to death in the wild stampede the famished animals made for food. 70% of the pigs collected at this station either died from starvation or were killed in the stampede.

In December 1920 a requisition of poultry took place in the district of Poltava. The peasants were to bring the poultry to the town of Poltava itself. 18 wagon-loads of poultry were collected and loaded npon trucks alive, but no food was supplied as the birds were to go to Harkov, at a short distance, and it was supposed that they would be fed there. A violent snow-storm, however, cut all communications between the two towns for a fortnight and the poultry-train never left Poltava. As instructions had been given to bring the poultry alive, it never occurred to the officials in charge to kill them. The fowls perished from starvation and cold and were thrown out of the trucks at Poltava. When fowls were requisitioned in the province of Volhyne a similar case occurred. The peasants had been ordered to deliver

the poultry in the villages, from whence they were to be transported alive by the «Provincial Council for Supplies». The officials neglected to prepare cages for the birds and solved the consequent difficulty by packing them in ordinary sacks and carting them to town in this fashion. When they got there, the fowls were naturally dead and unfit for use.

In February 1921 2 million pouds of grain that had been requisitioned from the peasants were stored in the open air along the Altai railway. Similar mounds of damp grain lay about the Kokchetav, Atbassar, Akmolinsk and Slavgorod districts. Only towards the end of February or the beginning of March did the officials in charge happen to see the possibility of repairing and using the special grain-dryers. Millions of pouds of corn were thus lost. Nobody has estimated the quantity of food supplies taken in this way from the peasants and wantonly wasted, but rumours of wasted cattle, grain, poultry, potatoes, cabbage, fruit, poured in from all directions.

Communist Russia, the poorest country in the world, was also, owing to bureaucratic mismanagement, the greatest spendthrift in regard to her material wealth. Although dying out from famine, she senselessly destroyed millions, possibly tens of millions, of her food supplies every year.

Predomination of political police motives. — Whilst the commonweath was being destroyed, all human rights abolished, material wealth wasted, the population of Russia, in its main classes, did not remain a silent spectator and passive instrument of the good pleasure of the State. The population protested vehemently and put up a desperate resistance. The struggle commenced immediately after the bolsheviks came to power and has continued up to the present day. The staunchest enemy of the bolsheviks — the intelligentsia — began the fight, and somewhat later the peasants and workmen were involved. The

army alone has remained comparatively (1) calm: only the most active and mobile part of it — the sailors of Kronstadt — having participated in the struggle in March 1921. The time for the soldier masses of the army has still to come.

The struggle has gone on continuously, occasionally gaining or losing in intensity. For four years the State has been stubbornly trying to enslave the nation and has failed to do so. Bound externally, Russia is internally free, and this fact guarantees the advent of future civic freedom for her.

In 1918 resistance was extremely fierce under the influence of the shameful Brest-Litovsk treaty and the consequent tide of demobilisation. Men arose in defence of their material interests, of their political, social or economic ideals, and were reinforced by those whom patriotism had stimulated to revolt. Insurrections in towns and villages, armies in the South, East and North, the murder of Volodarsky, of Uritzky, the assassination of Mirbach, the attempt against Lenin's life, numerous plots — all this impelled the government to resort to special devices for a protection against the tempest the bolsheviks themselves had raised. Already in the spring of 1918 the «Chresvichaikas» had been established; they were not strong as yet and played but a small part; their influence, however, steadily grew with the resistance the government met, and the Chresvichaikas gradually became what they are in contemporary Russia — the strongest instrument of an uncontrolled, irresponsible power, almost a state within the state — sometimes even an authority above the ruling one. In the existing conditions of legalised despotism, the urgent necessity for rapid and drastic measures allowed the Chresvichaikas complete freedom of action; the importance of their work for the government rendered

(1) I say «comparatively calm» as small revolts have often taken place amongst the men. They will be dealt with in the second part of this book.

them powerful; specially selected men,(1) working in an atmosphere of bitter civil war and prevailing moral decline, were the cause of their cruelty; the measure of success they achieved and the «excellence»(2) of their work made them practically irresponsible.

As a rule, communists clearly realise that without the support of the Che-ka (3) they would have lost both their power and their lives some time ago. They are perfectly aware of the bitter hatred the population bears towards them and know quite well that any change of government would lead to a wholesale massacre of communists. This knowledge strengthens the internal cohesion of the party and enhances the importance attached to the activity of the Che-ka. The men in charge of the Chresvichaika are even still more interested in the success of its work: in every township the government exists under a perpetual menace of rebellion that means certain death for the chiefs of the Chresvichaika.

Besides that, the salaries are very high; all over Russia a post in the Che-ka is considered the most remunerative. Unlike other soviet services, it provides sufficient food, high wages and good clothes. The following instance may serve as an illustration: every employee of the Moscow Chresvichaika received,

(1) This is how Dzerjinsky, the chief of the Chresvichaikas, speaks of the men employed in them: «Whilst they are wanted, they are the right men in the right place, but when the need of them shall have passed, three quarters of them will have to be shot, for they cannot be let loose on the world.»

(2) Owing to the high reputation of the Chresvichaikas, their organiser and chief, Dzerjinsky, was appointed, in the spring of 1921, Commissar of Transport — this most important branch of national economics. The organisation of torture-chambers proved, however, to be a more simple matter than that of railway transport. Notwithstanding his cruel orders in regard to fraudulent passengers on the steps and roofs of the cars, Dzerjinsky met with no better success than his predecessor, the «born» organisor Trotzky, or the «practical railway specialist» Emshanov.

(3) Short for Chresvichaika. (Translator's note).

during eight months in 1920, two pairs of boots, eight yards of silk material, three yards of cloth, two hats etc. To correctly estimate the value of this issue, it should be compared to what an ordinary workman got in Moscow — i. e. one fifteenth of a pair of boots (one pair for every 15 workmen) and four fifths of a yard of bad calico—for the whole of 1919. Everyone holding a position of any importance in the Chresvichaika receives specially large rations and, in addition frequent extra issues of sugar, butter, white flour, sweets, eggs, poultry etc. The main bulk of valuables requisitioned during searches and arrests executed by the Chresvichaika is divided amongst the employees. This is a general rule, unofficially acknowledged by the Chresvichaika. The following is a report of a government inspection of the Orel Provincial Che-ka: «Money, valuables and goods confiscated at the time of arrests were frequently not entered in the books, or entered according to statements of participators, no legal documents, protocols or inventories being produced by them. Owing to the absence of any inventory of confiscated goods and of any documents in relation to a series of confiscations and requisitions, it was quite impossible to establish the quantity of valuables confiscated and what eventually became of them. The inspection found that a very large quantity of confiscated property had been bought by Che-ka employees themselves at fabulously low prices; e. g. — a plush overcoat for 25 rbles, two rolls of cloth for 10 roubles, a photographic camera for 5 rbles and so on.» (Extract from the report of the Inspection.)

Abuse of unlimited power intoxicates the agents of the Chresvichaika and stimulates their activity. Nowhere in the world do men hold so arbitrary and complete a sway over the life or death of fellow-beings.

The power of the Chresvichaika is unlimited, neither social position, age, scientific attainments, nor other merits can save a

victim from its clutch. Communists are the only exception: although communists, barring the most important ones, may be arrested, they cannot be executed without the consent of the Party Central Committee. There are no imaginable ways of extorting a confession from a prisoner that Che-kas have hesitated to apply in the secrecy and gloom of their cellars. In Voronej, moulten lead has been poured down the throats of victims, or their heads gradually crushed flat between two planks. Savage beatings with rifle-butts, revolvers and so on were looked upon as natural and indispensible. A band of youthful pickpockets (between 11 and 15 years of age) was arrested at Moscow in May 1920. The Che-ka determined to make the most of this case. The children were confined in a cellar and isolated from the other prisoners. Threats and promises of reward were alternately used to make the children point out their accomplices. After some fruitless attempts to make them speak, several employees of the Che-ka entered the celler, pounded the children with their fists, and, having knocked them down, kicked them with their heavy boots. The miserable little wretches promised to disclose all their friends, but, as they did not know the names of the latter, they were dragged daily about the town on trams, in motor-cars and taken to railway stations to point out their accomplices. At first the children tried to pretend they knew no one. They were still more barbarously beaten that night, and they began to betray their associates. This torture went on for a fortnight: if a child had the bad luck not to meet or point out a comrade, he would be cruelly thrashed; to escape the savage punishment, the children finally pointed out innocent boys whom they did not know. Three weeks later the whole party was transferred to the Butyrsky prison. Thin, bruised, with an expression of fixed terror in their looks, they were like small, hunted animals expecting an imminent death. They sobbed, trembled and shrieked in their sleep. After two or three weeks, they were again removed

to the Chresvichaika. Prison old-timers told me that during their own arrest, they had never heard such heartrending cries as those of the children when they understood that they were going back to the cellar.

So intense is the hatred of the population towards the Che-ka, its members are considered with such abhorrence, that not every communist by far will accept a post there. Only men of a special mentality and with iron or diseased nervous systems enter the service: they are either naturally cruel men or sadists. Those in responsible posts very soon take to drink (1) or cocaine, they become hysterical or demented. The percentage of insane is particularly large amongst the executioners.

The Che-kas are entirely autonomous in their daily work, there is no control or supervision over them. The «Workmen and Peasants' Inspection» may revise every soviet institution, barring the Che-ka. The Workmen and Peasants' Inspection interfere with Che-kas only by special authorisation of the Provincial Soviet, when cases of pillage on an exceptionally grand scale come to light.

Che-kas often refuse to obey the most authoritative and influential chiefs and central institutions of the Soviet Republic, whilst local Che-kas will disregard orders given by their own central institution — the All-Russian Chresvichaika.

The All-Russian Che-ka is well aware of this tendency of its local branches and takes it into consideration. When, therefore, by the influence of some important personage, the All-Russian Che-ka wishes to liberate anyone that a local Che-ka has arrested, it will never give an order for that person's release, as it

(1) In every town, captured from the bolsheviks, the new authorities invariably found tremendous quantities of empty wine and spirit bottles in the houses that the Che-ka had occupied. It was thus in Kiev, Voronej, Jitomir and other towns. In 1920-1922 orgies were continually taking place in the Petrograd, Moscow, Archangel and other Chresvichaikas.

knows that such a step may lead to his immediate execution, and only insists that the prisoner should be transferred to Moscow on the pretence of a new accusation against him — and then sets him free. But even a «manoeuvre» of this kind is not always successful: victims, whose fate has been foredoomed by the local Che-ka, will immediately be killed on receipt of such an order, and a report sent to Moscow that the person in question had already been executed when the order arrived.

To what extent the Che-ka can be autonomous in regard to the Central Government is illustrated by the attitude the former adopted towards the decree of the 16th of February 1920, that cancelled capital punishment in Soviet Russia.

In Moscow, during the night in which the decree was being printed, mass executions took place and men were shot by the hundred; 72 persons were taken to execution from one prison only (the Boutyrka). Executions took place at Saratov also; the authorities received the decree in the daytime, annulled it by night and shot 52 people in the provincial prison. According to absolutely reliable information, the same happened at Toula and Tambov towards the end of February. Undoubtedly the decree led to similar results in other towns as well.

This free and easy attitude towards the decree had the support of the All-Russian Che-ka. By the order of the latter the left social-revolutionary Cherepanov was shot at the end of April 1920. In the object of helping those of its branches who desired to remain loyal to the decree of February 16th, the All-Russian Che-ka issued secret orders on the 18th of April 1920 to all its branches, demanding that persons condemned to death should be removed into the frontal regions, as the action of the decree did not extend to them. It is not likely that the branches ever found it expedient to conform to these instructions, inasmuch as the Che-kas possessed much simpler and

easier means of doing away with a person without directly violating the decree.

At the end of March 1920, a scientist, imprisoned by the Samara Che-ka on a political accusation, so infuriated his examiner by his dignified answers that the latter shouted: «You think that the decree of the 16th of February can save you from death! You are vastly mistaken! We have three ways of doing away with you: we can lock you up in a cold cellar and forget you there (it was winter), we can put you into a typhus ward and leave you without any care, or we can arrange an attempt to escape». — «I shall not attempt to escape», answered the victim. — «Neither will it be necessary», was the reply.

These illustrations of everyday occurrences in the life of the Communist State serve to indicate a third process that was gradually transforming it. Simultaneously with the enslavement of personality and the gangrenous, terrific growth of bureaucracy, the administration of the country was being remoulded to suit the interests of the political police that protected the government. As time went on, the importance of the former grew, for the government, rapidly losing the sympathies of those classes of the population that had hitherto supported it, became more and more isolated and detested. Merciless terror was the only means left to preserve supreme power, and Chresvichaikas of every rank were the corresponding instrument.

The famine of 1921 gave ample proof of the part the Che-ka and the political police played in the life of the state, and of the strength of their influence. When it first became aware of the extent of the famine, the government lost its head. The authorities instantly realised what the political consequences of the catastrophe would be, and also their own incapacity to cope with the calamity. It was quite obvious that the resources of impoverished Russia would never suffice to stay the disaster, help could only come from abroad, and Europe refused to trust the soviet govern-

ment. The position seemed indeed critical. At this juncture a group of former public men proposed that the Kreml should employ the organised educated forces of Russia to combat the famine. In their offer of assistance, the group pointed out the necessity of help from abroad and their hopes of obtaining it. The despairing government eagerly accepted the offer: on the 29th of June an evening telegram of Rosta (Russian Telegraph Agency) placarded all over Moscow, said: «A group of politicians of the pre-October period(1), headed by Prokopovich, Kuskova and others, have offered the government their co-operation in combating the famine. The offer has been accepted.»

After the Rosta telegram had been published, the All-Russian Che-ka protested in the Soviet of People's Commissars against the cooperation of politicians of the «pre-October period» on the grounds of «State security». The Soviet of People's Commissars convened a conference of the most responsible bolsheviks to discuss the advisability of co-operating with the educated social element in relief work.

The conference took place in the first days of July. The general opinion of the members acknowledged that this co-operation was indispensible. Although far from pleasant and likely to lead to political complications, it had to be accepted — there was no other way out of the quandary; help had to be got from abroad and only the «counter-revolutionaries» would be able to obtain it. After that Menjinsky, who represented the All-Russian Che-ka, curtly and definitely declared that on no account whatever and under no conditions whatsoever would the Che-ka allow the Public Committee to work. Menjinsky spoke briefly, but his words carried weight and his tone was final. Silence reigned after his speech. Then

(1) Pre-October politician, i. e. before the bolshevist coup d'état, and under the Provisional Government. (Translator's note).

Rykov asked without rising: «Does that mean, comrade Menjinsky, that if the Committee is formed, you will arrest its members?» — «We shall not stop before that», answered Menjinsky, also from his seat.

Menjinsky is a *persona grata* in the Chresvichaika and the first man there after Dzerjinsky; his influence is predominant in determining the general policy of the Che-ka and if he says anything, he usually means it. I was curious to find out what the initiators of the Public Committee thought about his threat and questioned one of them on the subject. «Events will prove stronger than their threats», said he, «they must feed the starving population and they won't be able to do so without drawing on the world's supply of grain. America and Europe will not give them corn, therefore, we are indispensible». The argument seemed sound enough, and yet the Committee, having started work in the middle of July, was dissolved by the Che-ka in the first days of August. My friend had overlooked a cardinal point in his premise «they must feed the starving population» i. e. that the urgency to retain supreme power was greater still, and that the appearance of a Committee that would serve to organise hostile forces stood in direct contradiction to this fundamental and pressing problem of the bolshevist government. The welfare of the famine-stricken people and the primary interest of the country were thus sacrificed to the interests of police protection of the government. A few million lives more or less is a small matter indeed on the scale of history; how much more important the problem.... of preserving one's own life.

As I have said, the famine of 1921 and the «New Economical Policy» were severe tests of the weight of political police interests and of the strength of the terroristical apparatus. Both came out of the trial with flying colours: the liberal economic policy was adjusted to an increase of political terror, whilst the needs of the starving and dying people were simply disregarded.

The importance of the Che-ka is growing; its increasing cruelty testifies to this. Never, not even under bolshevist rule, has Russia witnessed such a mass of executions as took place in the Crimea in 1920-21. According to the records of the Crimean Che-ka, the total attained from 65 to 85 thousand victims. Out of the 15,600 officers of Wrangel's army, barely a few hundred survived. Only experienced specialists, of whom the red army stood badly in need, were spared; all the rest were murdered. In the Holmogor concentration camp (Archangel province) over 3000 officers were shot in the late autumn of 1920. In April 1920, thousands of officers were shot at Omsk, Novonikolaievsk and Krasnoyarsk. In the large villages of the Ishim, Yaloutorovsk, Tiumen, Petropavlovsk and Shadrinsk districts several hundred persons were shot in each village. Families of men who had joined the insurgents were massacred wholesale — babes and bedridden old men included. After the Kronstadt rising, the Che-ka shot over 2000 sailors besides those who had been executed by the tribunal's orders.

The increased activity of Che-kas is also proved by the number of arrests made in 1921. The total much exceeded that of any of the previous years of soviet rule. Thousands of persons who had gone free in former years were now arrested on political charges. The Che-ka got hold of the lists of the candidates of various parties for the Constituent Assembly, the Zemstvos, Municipal and other elections in 1917, and arrested all the persons they mentioned. In May and August 1921, mass arrests were effected amongst the students for the first time during bolshevist rule. According to official data there were, towards the end of 1919, 21,000 political prisoners, towards that of 1920, 89,000, and in the middle of 1921, about 130,000.

Terror is not lessened; it is on the increase and it will continue to grow, as the need of it is ever greater. It may happen

that the ambition to be acknowledged by Europe will compel the Government to consent to a reform of the terroristical apparatus, it is even possible that the Che-ka may officially cease to exist, but nothing will alter the fact of the matter: Che-kas will flourish under another name and their activity will not abate.

The soviet régime came into the world as the political expression of the dictatorship of the proletariat. There will be no mis-statement in the affirmation that during the first year of its existence, the soviet régime had the support of the majority of the labouring class — but it was not long-lived. The workmen of a series of large factories (Obuchovsky, Troubochny etc.) even in Petrograd were opposed to the new government almost from the first. The most developed group of the proletariat — the printers — proved themselves fairly staunch opponents of the government throughout the entire period of its existence. In the second half of 1918, the stern lesson had sobered everyone. The organisers of anti-government conspiracies were already able, at that time, to recruit a considerable number of members from amongst the workmen of both capitals and of provincial towns. The labour disturbances of 1919 made the split between the government and the proletariat perfectly obvious. Finally, the widespread revolt of the workmen at the beginning of 1921 demonstrated that the government had lost the last shreds of its popularity.

As the gulf between the government and the workmen widened by degrees, the dictatorship of the proletariat changed into a dictatorship over the latter. The communist party became the actual, supreme power in the country. The ambiguity of the soviet constitution in reference to electioneering laws enabled the government to introduce open and cumulative voting and to hustle the elections as it suited them. Open polling allowed the authorities to be aware of each opponent, whilst the unlim-

ited tyranny of the Che-ka meted out the retaliation it pleased. By the means of hustled elections, that would often be appointed at a day's notice in factories and so on, the authorities not only prevented the opposition from organising any resistance, but gave them no time to come to an understanding between themselves. The electioneering commission was nominated by the government and had the right to stop an election at any given moment, deferring it «ad calendas»; moreover the political commissar of the factory could reject any list of candidates as «counter-revolutionary» and prohibit, on the same grounds, the debate on their mandate. Candidates of the opposition too often found themselves in prison instead of in the soviet. Finally, if even all these measures happened to miscarry and the result of an election was unfavourable for the government, it could always dissolve the newly-elected soviet. Thus, after non-party candidates and moderate social-democrats gained a majority in the municipal elections at Smolensk in 1921, the new soviet was dissolved on the spot by the old one and the town proclaimed «in a state of siege».

Such methods enabled the government to make obedient tools of the soviets. No protest was heard from these soviets when the rulers annulled the right — granted under the soviet constitution — «of every labourer to organise any unions or political parties, to assemble and meet, to enjoy complete liberty of spoken, written or published word» and so on. The only political organisation that exists at present in soviet Russia is the communist party which alone possesses complete freedom of speech, and the right of convening conferences and meetings. The party is subsidised by the government; its members have the use of motor-cars, telephones, telegraph, and enjoy special privileges when travelling. The party carries arms and its members practise military drill; there are special communist military detachments

that participate in perquisitions or punitive expeditions. All the responsible government posts in the capitals and in the provinces are filled by members of the party; consequently the whole life of the country is regulated according to communist party decisions. It is not the Soviet of People's Commissars or the All-Russian Conference of Soviets and its Executive Committee that hold supreme power in the «Soviet Republic», but the Communist Party.

Supreme authority within the party itself belongs to the Conference of Members, but, as the latter is a very bulky and unwieldy body, it is seldom convened. Contemporary Russian life, tense and hurried, full of complications and unexpected eventualities, demands rapid and firm decisions. A large conference, difficult to assemble, can obviously only play a minor part, there has to be a pliant and mobile body, always on the spot. This body exists under the form of the Party Central Committee, which practically rules Russia, as all the members of the Soviet of People's Commissars, being communists, are bound by party discipline to accept the decisions of the Central Committee.

But the Central Committee is, notwithstanding, too blunt a point for the summit of the Dictatorship. Its composition depends too much on chance, as the members are elected by the Conference of the Communist party and may be undesirable from the leaders' point of view. Absolute secrecy cannot be guaranteed in such a committee — imformation may leak out — and absolute secrecy is an essential condition, especially in matters of foreign policy, as they require exceptional wariness, and a specially careful choice of men.

It became therefore urgent to create a smaller group within the Committee, to endow it with plenitude of power and exclude the undesirable members of the Committee itself. Such a group was formed; it is termed the «Political Bureau

of the Central Committee of the Communist Party». The «Politbureau» is elected by the Central Committee. It is supposed to work out those decisions on the most important questions of internal and especially foreign policy that are finally taken by the Central Committee itself. But in practice this is not adhered to; the Politbureau has long ago overstepped its legal competence: very far from all of its conclusions are brought into the Central Committee and sanctioned by the latter. I know of an instance when a member of the Central Committee inquired, at a sitting, into the policy of the Politbureau in regard to a foreign state. Lenin, representing the Politbureau, refused to give an answer even to the Central Committee. «You must understand», he said, «that the question concerns such delicate and subtle matters, success depends to such an extent upon complete secrecy, that to answer the question may infinitely impair the result». The question was not answered and the Committee did not protest.

The Politbureau consists of five members. At the beginning of 1921 three of them were: Lenin, Krestinsky and Stalin.

Thus the most important questions of the nation's life, the relations of the country to foreign states, leading to war or peace, are entirely and uncontrolledly in the hands of five men.

From the dictatorship of a class, the country has passed on to a Directory or a Dictatorship of Five.

Local autonomy. — Chaotic distribution of power in the administration of the Soviet Republic is one of the features that sharply distinguish it from a normal state. I have already referred to this trait when speaking of the feebleness of the central government and of the development of local autonomy. I also mentioned the primary causes of this phenomenon.

Soviets at once embody local autonomous administration and are the representatives of the central government, elected by the local population. All the other administrative bodies act merely as the executives of the soviet. Such a construction of the administrative apparatus leads in itself to a perpetual conflict between central and local authorities. Every soviet official is subordinated to two chiefs; as a representative of state interests he must take his orders from the central government, so far as he represents the local Executive Committee he is entirely dependant on his electors. As the last is more direct and practically sensible, local interests and local opinions always carry more weight with provincial commissars than the influence of the distant centre. Hence arises the present prevailing Russian anarchy, or, to quote the ironical expression in vogue — «the Power of the Local Governments».

The centre is, of course, much stronger than the local governments and in cases of importance can always find the means to make itself obeyed, but there remain innumerable minor conflicts and frictions that lead to endless disputes and loss of time.

The way in which bolshevist power spread over Russia enhanced, as shown above, the tendency to «self-determination» in the localities. The large part played by local forces at the beginning of the soviet régime increased their own opinion of the «services» rendered by them to the Republic and led to an exaggerated conception of what they conceived to be their rights, supported by reminiscences of the relations between them and the central government during the period of the complete initial disorganisation of the latter. Lastly, the political life of the latter years, filled by insurrections and wars, during which local governments would be continually cut off from the centre, caused the government to appreciate energetic and strong local authorities, capable of dealing independently with

any emergency, and to be careful not to curtail their rights or be too firm with them.

Finally, trouble is added by the haziness of the soviet constitution. No decrees regulating relations between the Central Government and the Provinces have been issued. Consequently, the latter have full scope to interpret these relations as they please, and local politicians are not inclined to minimise their own rights in the matter.

The outcome of all these causes is that the local governments are perpetually trying to «self-determine» themselves from the central government by ignoring the latter's directions and acting according to their own ideas. I have given examples of local autonomy in the sphere of political terror. The following is a series of facts relating to various sides of life during the last years of the period embraced by this book.

In the Crimea (after its occupation by Soviet troops), when the peninsula was being swamped in blood at first by the Hungarian Communist Bela Kuhn and later by the secretary of the Moscow Communist Party Committee, Iakovleva, there were cases not only of arrest, but execution of the emissaries of several central commissariats. The «New Economic Policy» had already been solemnly proclaimed in Moscow for some time, when in the Toula and Perm provinces the local government destroyed the co-operative organisations, that, by some miracle, still existed. No notice was taken of imploring and threatening telegrams from Moscow. Peasant artisans of the Ruzski district (Moscow province), who were engaged upon work for the army and were, therefore, exempted even from military service, were mobilised by the local Soviet for the «Labour Service». The workmen refused to abandon their work and sent representatives to Moscow. Their representatives returned with written orders from the government exempting them from forced labour. Nevertheless, they were mobilised

and marched 46 versts to the district town, where for three days... they carried water, sawed firewood and heated the stoves of the local Soviet. In the district of Vetluga (Kostroma Prov.), in the midst of the spring sowing, the peasants were driven by armed force from their fields and were employed, together with their horses, to cart timber for floating down the river. This happened at the time when «State control of Agriculture» had commenced, and the «Agricultural Front» had been declared to be a «Storming Front» by the Central Government. In April 1921 after «Freedom of Trade» had already been proclaimed, I have seen peasants who brought market produce arrested, and their produce confiscated. The Central Government issued a decree prohibiting confiscation of household property and personal belongings — and all over Russia confiscations continued as it nothing had happened. The Moscow Government leased industrial concerns, the local government promptly requisitioned them again... After the proclamation of the «New Economic Policy», the Centre ordered armed detachments that prevented the transport of provisions to be withdrawn in several provinces, but the local governments disapproved, and the detachments continued their work for some months after the decree had been issued and in spite of supplementary threatening orders to the contrary from the Commissariat of Supplies.

It is not difficult to see how this separatism of the local governments upsets and confuses the life of the inhabitants. A citizen's every step is full of risk. Any commercial or industrial business, if conducted over a broad area, inevitably becomes a game of luck.

It will also be obvious that the programme of «a systematically planned commonwealth», which the bolsheviks carried on their banners, demanded a firm, centralised administrative apparatus; the programme could not but suffer from the actual conditions that reigned. Industrial concerns in the provinces, although

subordinated to the central government, depended to a great extent upon the local government for supplies of fuel, raw material, provisions, money, clothes etc. The local governments were to a degree autonomous and had their own opinions; the outcome of this was that factors of production were disposed of in opposition to the wishes of the Centre. This increased the irregularity of the work in Russian Industry and hastened the general dissolution of the commonwealth.

Any serious attempt to reconstruct Russia's internal life on principles of normal and sound statemanship will inevitably collide with the anarchic decentralisation of power, as it makes a heterogeneous feudal conglomerate out of an officially united and homogeneous state. Russian economics have reverted to the primitive system of the Middle Ages, and the Russian administrative apparatus, with its chaotic organisation and dispersion of power, also resembles the governments of that period.

«Power of the local governments» is in modern times the greatest obstacle to a resumption of normal conditions of economic life. The contemporary financial and commercial system which welds a country into a stable, united economic entity, cannot exist without a single code of law, uniform law-courts and a co-ordinated administration; these, in the actual situation of Soviet Russia, are impracticable.

State finances. — The degeneration of the state was reflected in its finances. In spite of the fact that an enormous number of industrial concerns, formerly the property of private owners, now belonged to the State, the total quantity of materials in the Government's hands decreased yearly. The following table gives the expenditure of the state budget in millions of gold roubles:

1913.....	3,208	1919.....	758
1918.....	890	1920.....	684

As can be seen, the progressive ruin of the country entails a corresponding ruin of the state. Notwithstanding the increased expenses, only 21.3% of the total of 1913 was disbursed in 1920.

The sources of the state's income were also impoverished. The State drew its «income» from five sources: (1) taxes, (2) levies on the well-to-do classes, (3) income from nationalised industry, (4) issue of paper currency, (5) operations of the Commissariat of Supplies.

In 1920 taxes gave the paltry sum of 471 million roubles (0.3% of the income and 0.053% of the expenditure). Levies, frequently practised in 1918 and part of 1919 by local governments, subsequently became insignificant. The levy of 10 milliards made in 1918 which was executed on an «All Russian» scale, in spite of special measures finally used to collect it, had given up to December 1920, only 1,628 million roubles — i. e. only 16%.

Great hopes were at first entertained of the income from the nationalised industry. Almost all the State's expenditure, it was supposed, would be covered by it. The commissar of Finance Krestinsky wrote in the appendix to the budget of 1918, speaking of «the rapid growth of efficiency of proletariat labour»: «This growth of the industrial forces of the nation is indispensable to give the political power of the proletariat an economic stability. If industry were to live at the expense of agriculture and the peasants, the political power of the proletariat would be economically absurd and impossible. It would clash with the interests of the peasantry and inevitably succumb before them.»

These hopes were not realised: industry lives at the expense of the State. The industrial concerns under the administration of the Supreme Council of National Economics made, in 1918, 33,920 million roubles deficit (69.8% of their expenditure) and

in 1920, 315,581 million deficit (85.7% of the expenditure). (1) Railways and transport also worked at a loss through all the years of soviet régime.

The major part of the State's income is drawn from the issue of paper money and the collection of an endless variety of taxes in kind from the peasants. The issue of paper money increases fantastically. In millions of soviet roubles it was: in 1918, 36,952; in 1919, 163,751; in 1920, 955,233. At the time I left Moscow (at the beginning of the second half of 1921) the daily issue was equal to 11 milliard roubles. According to recent newspaper reports the total quantity of paper money issued by the Soviet Government up to March 1922 reached the sum of 10,500 milliard roubles. The printing of paper money is the only production which in the hands of the bolsheviks continually increases in volume. Nevertheless, it does not keep up to the demands; every year and, at present, every month, the shortage of money is becoming more acute. In May 1921 the position became so critical that, at a sitting of the lesser Soviet of People's Commissars, Lenin remarked with a shrug of his shoulders that he wondered: «if it were possible that we should break our necks over such trifles as famine and insufficiency of paper currency»...

The Government is indebted to everyone and everything. For months it does not pay workmen, schoolmasters, soviet employees, the peasants for work and requisitioned supplies; frequently even the army remains unpaid. Such is the position, not only in the provinces, that are chronically short of money, but in the Capital as well. The shortage is so acute that it often

(1) According to newspaper reports of the returns of the Supreme Council of National Economics, the Government in 1921 advanced 789 milliards soviet roubles to the nationalised industrial concerns and received 64.5 milliards worth of produce from them; i. e. the deficit for 1921 is equal to 91.8%.

affects urgent and vital matters. Thus, in 1921, about 1,500,000 cubic sajenes of timber remained in the water after they had been floated to the collecting point, because of the lack of means in food, forage and money to carry on the work — in spite of the general desperate need of firewood and timber in the country. The timber, left in the water, was either washed away by the current or stolen by the population.

The torrent of paper currency emitted leads to a catastrophic depreciation of its value; in June 1920 a golden rouble was worth 20,000 soviet roubles on the clandestine Moscow exchanges, whilst in February 1921 it had risen to 270,000. All the efforts of the government to stabilise the exchange are futile and will remain so, as the population has no faith in the government's policy and consequently money does not flow into the banks. The catastrophic decrease in the value of money makes the emission of the latter a destructive force in national economics and a heavy tax upon the holders of the currency who are chiefly peasants.

During all the years of soviet rule there has been, and is, only one class of the population capable of bearing the burden of the State's expenditure. This class is the peasantry, and not only has it hitherto shouldered the weight by covering its own expenses, but it has given to the State, by means of the food-tax. Above that, as the peasants are the sole producers of the most valuable commodities — food stuffs, all the paper money emitted finally finds its way into their hands and it is they who bear the brunt of the depression of the currency besides giving the state the benefit of an endless number of labour and transport compulsory services.

The extent and cost of the last two services are great, although they cannot be estimated in roubles; but if we estimate the value of paper money in gold roubles, and the value of the produce requisitioned from the peasants at the

prices of 1913, we will have the following table, expressing the income derived by the State in millions of gold roubles:

Years	Emission of currency	Income from the national-ised industry	Food tax	Total
1918.....	525	198	127	890
1919.....	390	116	253	758
1920.....	200	33	451	684

If we allow that in 1920 75% of the money issued found its way to the peasants' hands, then, by means of the emission and the food tax, the government has received from the peasants 150,451 million gold roubles, i. e. 88% of the valuables at its disposal.

Such then is the share of the peasant in financing the State — he has paid at least 0.9 of the expenses of the latter.

IV.

CULTURE.

A cursory examination of scientific, educational, publishing and artistic activities in contemporary Russia will be enough to show the disastrous effects of the recent political and social changes on the mental life of the country. But the reaction of these changes on the perceptions, sentiments and ideas of the population, i. e. — the new mental aspect due to them — will be described in the second part of this book.

Inasmuch as cities are dying out and national economics deteriorating, so is civilisation vanishing from Russia, and the general opinion that holds this view is in the main correct. But it would be an error to think that culture is altogether extinct in Russia and that the emigration abroad has inherited the noble task of saving and re-establishing Russian civilisation. The scope and intensity of cultural life is decreasing in Russia, but civilisation is not dead — nor will it die.

Adverse forces affecting culture. — The following five circumstances are disastrous in their effects on culture: (1) economic poverty, (2) progressive decline of well-being and of the comforts of life, (3) intolerable administrative and legal conditions, (4) excessive shortage of appliances necessary for cultural life, (5) the policy of the government in matters of culture.

The loss of material well-being has led to an acute scarcity

of necessaries of existence, such as food, clothing and fuel. Cities, the centres of cultural activities, have suffered most in this respect. Appalling material conditions caused a marked decline in the forces devoted to learning, research and education: the number of persons engaged in this sphere of activity has diminished and the efficiency and energy of those who remain is undermined.

In Petrograd alone, eleven scientists, including one member of the Academy and seven professors, died in the closing months of 1920. During the winter of 1920-1921, at a meeting of the Union of Professors and Teachers, the assembly did honour to the memory of fourteen deceased members, all of whom had died in one single month. The Conference of Russian scientists in Prague (October 1921) published a list of 156 Russian men of science who had perished during the four years of Soviet régime The majority died prematurely, from the effects of privations and epidemic disease. Within Russia herself the losses among scientists are reckoned to be even greater: the list reaches close on 400. In 1920 the Department of the «Single School of Knowledge and Labour» of the Commissariat of Education compiled a diagram in which the losses among teachers in all the schools of Soviet Russia are estimated at 30%; in the provinces of Odessa and Ufa they stand at 40%, in Archangel at 52% and in Tzaritsin as high as 65%.

The position and conditions of life of the personnel that is still labouring in the field of education is depicted as follows: «The Statistics of the department of the «Single School of Knowledge and Labour» show that 100% of the teachers in fourteen provinces are in a state of pauperism; in the rest of Russia 30% or 40% of masters are in a similar position. 50% of the total number of teachers are literally in the throes of famine». Professors and members of the Academy suffer no less. In Moscow, I happened to meet a professor of the University of Perm, the

delegate of his university. He was dressed in a ragged overcoat and hat, his toes, in dirty cloth socks, protruded from his boots, he wore a long unkempt beard and the filth of a seven days' journey in a cattle-truck still clung to his person. An overwhelming majority of men of science and of letters, journalists and teachers, are compelled to escape cold and hunger by seeking employment in Soviet institutions, in co-operative undertakings, as librarians in public libraries, as typists and even dock hands. The greatest of contemporary Russian writers, V. G. Korolenko is at this moment dying. He lived on dry crusts of bread that he had to soak in tea to be able to swallow them. All take their chattels, books and clothing to the markets to buy bread with them: in summer they work as labourers in kitchen gardens and so on. Only very few members of this class have maintained their former standard of living and are still able to concentrate their energies on the work they were engaged in previously.

Institutions and buildings dedicated to cultural work are in a corresponding state. The stocks of fuel and building materials available are insufficient for the demands of factories, important government offices and barracks; in consequence, no attention whetever is given to the needs of scientific and educational institutes. From primary schools to universities, laboratories, libraries and museums, they are never heated and never repaired. The buildings, almost unfrequented, are falling into ruin; during occasional lectures, the lecturer and the audience retain their overcoats, hats and gloves.

The economic debacle has led to a growing disorganisation of the conditions of civilised life. As the central heating system of large town houses could not work, the inhabitants were forced to construct small stoves of an endless variety (commonly called «Sovdepky» «Burjuiky» and so on); they filled the rooms with smoke and soot. But even the use of such diminutive stoves was so restricted, that all the members of a

household would be huddled up in one room in winter and concentrated mental effort became impossible. Fuel had to be stacked in the flats, hauled down into the yard to be split and hewn and then dragged up again. After climbing up to his flat with a bundle of wood, T. A. Pokrovsky, professor of civil law, died suddenly from heart failure. If the water-supply ceased, water had to be fetched from far off. Even the most necessary food stuffs could only be obtained after waiting in queues for long hours, or even days. As trams were unavailable and cab fares prohibitive, much time and strength had to be wasted in getting from one place to another, to the complete and final exhaustion of sick and elderly people. If absence of lighting, from which all the cities, barring Moscow, suffered, is added to the list of hardships and privations, the extent of the disorganisation of conditions of every-day life becomes apparent. In such circumstances, the few remaining members of this group of the intelligentsia who still persevered with their normal occupations were unable to maintain the former standard and efficiency of their work.

Books, scientific apparatus, chemical glass, even ink, drawing pins, pencils, pens and paper were unobtainable. I know an instance where a learned specialist on political economy spent several days in trying to procure a box of drawing pins. He succeeded in getting them only after a personal interview with the Chief of the Commissariat of Education and as the result of instructions issued personally by the latter. In my notes on Soviet Russia I have taken down the words of another scientist. «I am engaged in scientific work,» said he, «and wish to pursue it — therefore I am driven to steal. I lack the necessary appliances and have no means of procuring them. I know where they are to be found and when I can, I take them — I actually do so. Theft is repulsive, but there is no other way.»

Books are extremely scarce. Book-shops do not exist — and if they did, few could afford to buy books. The public libraries are unserviceable in winter on account of the cold. On one occasion, when I entered the rooms in the Roumiantsev library set apart for scientific reading, I was astounded to see the windows open. The person in charge informed me that it was much warmer out of doors and that therefore she had decided to keep the windows open to warm herself and the premises.

Few books are being published; the ones that appear hardly ever reach the persons engaged in scientific work. The most valuable book published by the government press was en edition of the works and correspondence of A. I Herzen. In accordance with «regulated» distribution, only professor Sakouline and one other professor received copies of the work. All the efforts of other professors to obtain the book remained futile; even those who were lecturing on the History of Russian Literature never received it. The entire edition found its way into the libraries of various communist party organisations and similar institutions. In the provinces libraries containing more than five hundred volumes were confiscated, and the people who needed books for their work were especially affected by these proceedings. The shortage of school books and stationary became so acute, that it made normal work even in the primary schools practically impossible (see below).

Existing legal conditions exercised a no less disastrous influence on culture. Apart from the general oppression suffered by all classes, the intellectual worker had special hardships of his own to contend with. It was impossible to collect, be in possession of, or work at «counter-revolutionary» material and information. No literary work dealing with the historical, economic or artistic aspects of contemporary Russian life could be carried on, if unfavourable to the government. Prolonged detention in prisons and cellars was the consequence, if the «Che-ka» happened to

detect manuscripts or notes of this nature. Even works of an entirely impartial character, bearing no references whatsoever to the actualities of soviet life. were fraught with dangerous consequences. My notes on the question of a peasant intelligentsia, covering the period up to 1917 and dealing with eight to ten provinces, that it took me three years to collect, perished in the «Che-ka»; in spite of the fact that they contained no seditious matter what ever, I was unable to get them back. Such things were not unusual and people engaged in literary work, especially authors treating of sociological questions, became as proficient in the art of concealing their manuscripts as the peasants in that of hiding their corn. Many writers abstain altogether from dealing with «dangerous» questions.

Lastly, the policy of the government in the sphere of culture was followed by deplorable results. This policy did not posess the clearness or the uniformity of the Soviets economic programme. Its lack of definite principles is due to the fact that *socialist ideology has always centred on economic problems, whereas questions of mental and spiritual welfare have been completely neglected*. The resulting omission proved to be the weakest side of Socialism; dealing exclusively with the institutions and economic aspects of the community, it overlooked the all-important fundamental factor of every form of society, i. e. — the human personality. Whilst the attention of Socialism was concentrated on the task of remodelling the relations between the different groups of the community by means of state coercion, the human soul with its predominant influence on all human intercourse has been forgotten. *Bolshevism, the virulent outcome of revolutionary socialism, has inherited the latter's disregard of the human personality. Bolshevism came into power with a definite economic programme, and a total absence of any fixed policy in the sphere of culture.*

In consequence of this the bolshevist exposition of their

cultural policy is a heterogeneous compilation of: (1) doctrines common to all democratic programmes (a free, universal, and lay system of education); (2) purely bolshevist theories, in no way connected with socialism or communism (such as the abolition of the study of foreign languages in the schools; every teacher being put in charge of a fixed group of scholars and reading on all subjects); (3) the principle of «communisation» of science, art, journalism, the teaching personnel and the scholars, also invented by the bolsheviks. The actual results of such a policy were: moral degeneration and mortality among the infant inmates of the government «Houses for Children»; the destruction of primary, the collapse of secondary and, to some extent of the higher (university) systems of education; the decay of the formerly flourishing Russian scientific and artistic literature and journalism; and, lastly, a general contraction in the intellectual horizons of the rising generation.

We will now pass on to an investigation of the conditions in the various branches of culture mentioned above.

Up to the famine of 1921-1922 glorious tidings of a veritable chidren's paradise, created in Russia by the Soviet government, came from Moscow. Children's homes, creches, kindergartens, colonies for children, special issues of food for them... The child's welfare seemed to be assured and safeguarded, especially in the case of children maintained by the State. In proof of this, guests from Europe and America were shown over a few well organised childrens' colonies near Petrograd and Moscow; the visitors were informed that the colonies demonstrated were typical of the institutions in question and various «facts» were supplied in corroboration

The bolsheviks contrasted the communists' attitude towards children with that of the bourgeois regime, and the comparison went against the latter. We, who were living in Russia and who had the possibility of looking behind the scenes, knew only

too well that the actual conditions were not only vastly different from those advertised but were appalling to the last degree. The «Childrens' Houses» whose inmates in the middle of 1921 numbered 350,000 were simply «angel farms» and simultaneously hotbeds of vice. The children died in tens of thousands from want of attention, nourishment and clothing. Those who survived gradually, day by day, became moral cripples. The children were placed in charge of uneducated women addicted to theft and vice who never attempted to conceal their mode of living, their orgies and debaucheries. The vices of the elders infected the children, and theft, hooliganism and prostitution were rife among them.

A lady friend of mine visited one of these Houses in the province of Poltawa, on an estate formerly belonging to the Prime Minister Trepov. The institution was called the «Kolontai Ditiatchi Boudinok» Two years previous to the revolutions, Trepov, for the reception of a Grand Duke, had converted his house into a palace. The «Boudinok» occupied this very house together with the «Revkom» (Revolutionary Committee, the members of which are appointed). During an inspection of the house one of the walls produced a hollow sound. A hiding place with concealed treasure was promply suspected and a breach made in this and several other walls The damage was remedied by plastering up the walls with yellow clay; my friend asserted that the colour of the clay went admirably with the enamel on the walls and the artistic mural decorations. Thus was the house «renovated». Things proceeded in a similar strain. In seven months the water supply drains and electricity ceased to work; the walls were all scribbled over, the baths broken and occasionally used as latrines. The beautiful grounds surrounding the palace were turned to the same purpose by women, men and children alike.

The lower story was occupied by offices of the «Revkom»,

living rooms of its members and also by the rooms of the «kerivnitsi» (childrens' governesses), who were brutal, dirty, thieving and ardent communists. Revels took place on the ground floor, and the children attended as onlookers. The revels were enlivened with wine, music and the company of the «kerivnitsi». As the hours wore on they became regular orgies, and the children would witness scenes of incredible debauchery. When my friend very carefully broached the subject in an interview with the Poltava District Adviser on Pre-School Education and pointed out the unadvisability of the children witnessing such scenes, she met with a severe rebuff: «We are educationg the children to the realities of life», was the answer of the woman communist instructor, «we do not desire to reinstitute the former bourgeois schools in which a stone wall shut out all the actualities of life from the children. They must know the laws of nature and the natural mutual attraction of the sexes».

Evidently, the «kerivnitsi» shared the adviser's views on the questions of education; these views were put into effect in the whole district and not merely at the orgies mentioned above.

No regular system of catering for the «Boudenok» existed; all the needs were met by requisitions upon the inhabitants of the village of Chootov. The procedure of procuring the daily milk will serve as an illustration. Early in the morning two armed soldiers with pails would be sent out from the «Boudenok»; they would go round the houses of the village and demand milk. Should the housewife declare that no milk was available or that she was forced to surrender more than was her proper share, the soldiers themselves undertook the search. The milk that was found would be poured into the pail and the woman cursed or thrashed. Sometimes the milk would be sour and the housewife would draw the attention of the soldiers to the fact «That's all right» came the answer «they'll swallow it!». And all kinds of milk, sour and sweet, cooked and unboiled, would

be mixed in the same pail; when the pail was full the soldiers would return to the «Boudinok».

In the circumstances it was not surprising that the children were constantly ill, that in summer dysentery thrived and mortality was high

Clothes and underwear for the children were also supplied by the local inhabitants: the all-powerful «Revkom» exacted the necessary materials from the population and forced the latter to make the clothes, shirts and pants. Should the «Boudinok» run out of bread, groats or fat, a special tax in these products would have to be paid by the villagers.

The children in the Boudenok received no education whatsoever, except that they were initiated into the «laws of nature» and frequently thrashed for getting into mischief.

It is superfluous to quote any more examples of the life of the children in the «Childrens' Houses»; I have at my disposal a report dealing with the conditions of children in the Soviet Republic, compiled by the Commissariat for Education. The report was written by order of Lunatcharsky for the eighth Conference of Soviets (December 1920), but was never submitted to the Conference; Lunatcharsky found the document «Extremely tactless» and by his orders it was forbidden for circulation. A vigourous hunt for copies of the report ensued; typists' houses were searched and copies, found in the possession of officials, confiscated; girl typists were forced to certify that all the copies had been returned and information supplied concerning those already issued. But in spite of all, the document still exists and I give an extract from it, referring to pre-school education and instruction.

«Day by day, the mortality among parents increases on account of the war, famine and epidemics. The numbers of orphans and homeless children are growing at a ghastly rate. It has been noticed that children, not only in the famine areas, but also in the

producing provinces (Tambov, Pensa and many others) have become vagabonds; hungry and naked they roam about the country. They grow depraved, steal and are a cause of fear and panic in the villages.

In the Don and Kuban areas, where fighting has recently ceased, one meets the same homelessness and neglect amongst children, and the number of such is increasing apallingly. A disorderly and unorganised mass of children is moving southward to places where the climate is warm and food plentiful. On the way, the children unite into regular bands and establish large encampments at important railway junctions.

Thus in the autumn of 1920 there was a camp of three hundred children near the station of Tikhoretsk: Five hundred arrived simultaneously at Piatigorsk. The stream of children is daily increasing and is assuming a dangerous character.

To cope with the situation the commandant of the clearing station of the Caucasian front resorted to inexcusable measures. He issued instructions that a barrier of armed troops was to prevent the entry of children into the area; not a single child was to be allowed to pass into the region of the Caucasus. Similar measures were adopted in the Don and other provinces, and the children found themselves in a trap; whichever way they turned they met with an armed barrier.

The child grows wild, savage and tries every possible means to find a way through; he even resorts to arms. The local supply organisations refuse to feed them. The savage and hungry bands, very often a hundred or a hundred and thirty strong, as at Rostov, in the Kuban and in other places, are collected by the militia and the railway authorities and handed over to the departmental office of the Commissariat of Education. The latter has not the means of handling the avalanche of children, and for days they remain at the gates of the office sleeping on the pavements and

stairs. In the hope of exciting compassion they sing the «International».

Another group of children, numbering about 30,000, for whom the State is responsible, urgently demand attention and care. This group comprises the inmates of the former Foundling homes of Petrograd and Moscow, who are now scattered over the provinces of Petrograd, Novgorod, Pskov, Toula and Kalouga. The peasants, hardly able to maintain their own families, refuse to feed these children and hand them over, often in groups of ten, as was the case in Maloyaroslav in the province of Kalouga, to the Commissariat of Education. The «Ispolkom» (Executive Committee) orders the Commissariat to receive the children, threatening the members with reprisals if the orders are not carried out. The department, however, is unable to comply, and the children remain with the exasperated peasants. The wretched children are treated like animals by the latter and the mortality among them reaches a disastrous proportion.

The position of the children admitted into the «Childrens' Houses» is no better, as the conditions in the «Houses» are ghastly and resemble those of prison stations.(1) The buildings are overcrowded to the extreme; «Houses» with accomodation for 40 or 50 inmates, have to receive as many as 150 and 200.

Where the conditions are favourable, six or eight children sleep in one bed. More often, as is the case in the provinces of Saratov, Tambov (district of Kirsanov), in the Don and Kuban, the children sleep on the bare floor, or on heaps of straw or shavings that are hardly ever changed. The bedding swarms with insects, and the children are eaten alive by them. There can be no question of the Houses being adapted or suitably equipped for their object. The children, dressed in rags, sit about on bare floors; as

(1) Stations formerly situated on the route to Siberia and at which convicts travelling on foot used to spend the night. (Translator).

crockery is non-existent, they feed from dirty tins and boot polish boxes, which, in many instances, they have picked up in the streets; as spoons are not supplied, the children use their hands instead, holding them in the shape of a cup.

On account of the acute shortage of kitchen utensils, as for instance in the Houses in the provinces of Kursk, Rostov, Pensa and others, the dinner often consists only of soup and has to be cooked in three relays. Consequently, the preparation of one dinner occupies the whole day, and the children, like hungry little animals, spend their time at the kitchen doors, waiting for their turn, squabbling, shouting, jostling and fighting for their share. When at last they get their food, they bolt it choking and burning themselves.

The children receive no supper, whereas the messes for Soviet government officials are satisfactorily organised and daily by two o'clock have already issued the dinner.

Everywhere (in the provinces of Orel, Viatka, Pskov, Altai, Nijni Nowgorod) the children are barefoot and naked, and the statistics of the Department of the Welfare of Children of the Commissariat of Education clearly indicate that no other alternative is possible. According to the returns of the Department, in 1920 six inches of cloth per child were issued, instead of the required sixteen archines (1); one reel of cotton for every 29 children, whereas a reel per head is necessary; half a solotnik (2) of cotton wool, instead of one pound; one pair of summer shoes for every 39 and one pair of winter felt boots for 312 children; one blanket for 3,124, whereas one blanket was demanded for every 43 inmates of the Houses; one pair of socks was alloted to 264 children, and not a single change of underclothes existed anywhere, Thus in the province of Orel one pair of boots was issued for 5000 children

(1) 1 arshine = 2 1/3 feet. (Translator).
(2) 1 solotnik = 1/96 of a Russian pound. (Translator).

and 0.031 archine of cotton stuff per head. In the Orenburg district the children, barely covered by rags, went about half naked and were ashamed to be seen by strangers. In summer conditions were better, as the children could simply go naked, whilst the linen was washed and dried in the sun, whereas in winter, when the temperature of the rooms was not more than 3° Reaumur this expedient could not be resorted to, and the underclothes were not washed or changed for three and four months at a time. The linen came to resemble a dirty, grey rag and fell to pieces. Shoes are nowhere to be found; in some of the Houses wooden soles were used, the feet of the children being wrapped in old rags — but this was a favoured exception. In other provinces, Saratov, Kursk, Altai, even old rags for wrapping the childrens' feet in were unobtainable; the children ran about barefoot, suffering cold and frostbite, and their bodies, hands and feet were covered with chilblains. The children generally suffer from mange; their wretched bodies are one continuous sore, swarming with lice — the child's body rots alive. At night, when the suffering becomes unbearable, the wretches shriek with pain and horror. In Pensa, in 1920, at the childrens' collecting station, a boy of six was so bitten by lice that he lost his reason. At first he used to catch the insects, bite and eat them; later, in his delirious imagination, the louse grew to so gigantic a size that he was no more able to struggle against it; from morning till night he shrieked in convulsions.

The cold in the «Childrens' Houses» is unbearable. The rooms occupied by children are not heated anywhere (provinces of Saratov, Simbirsk, Pensa, Vladimir etc.): the corners of the rooms contain veritable snow drifts. There is no light, as electric bulbs or paraffin are unobtainable: children of the age of 13 and 15 have to go to bed at five in the afternoon.

The atmosphere of the rooms is appalling . Latrines do not exist. The living rooms and even the beds are used for the purpose.

The children are so poisoned with the stench of the rooms that they faint when they reach the open air.

In the producing provinces (Tambov, Piatigorsk, Cheliabinsk), as well as in famine stricken areas (Kasan, Vladimir), the children are literally starved: the amount of food they get is less than the most restricted famine ration. For instance, in the province of Kursk, the ration is a quarter of a pound of bread per day, and the bread is not even made of rye. It is millet bread (in the province of Kaluga) or made from «kostrets» — a substitute that poisons the human system and is considered absolutely unfit even for cattle.

When the children do receive vegetables these are rotten, frozen and unconsumable.

At Atkarsk, in the province of Saratov, responsible communists held the opinion that it would be kinder to shoot the child inmates of the «Childrens' House», than to torture them as was being done.

To mention education in this connexion sounds preposterous: and, naturally, the children are taught nothing. The older ones gamble at cards, smoke and drink vodka: girls of 16 and 19 sell themselves.

Yet all these horrors fade when compared with the absolute depravation and mental and spiritual wretchedness of the children who are considered «morally defective». In local institutions they are regarded as dangerous criminals past any reform: and treated as adult malefactors. Such children are imprisoned, flogged and left to perish. One finds a great number of syphilitics among them. In Ekaterinodar 60 of the 299 inmates of the House for Morally defective children were suffering from the disease. The children, many of whom are exceptionally gifted, with highly strung nervous systems, are buried alive and literally perish in this place.

It is a shame to have to admit that these children constitute our future, our support, pride and strength. «Houses for Children»

do not serve as centres of communistic propaganda: on the contrary, they foster counter-revolutionary sentiments in the population. At Saratov, during the great fire, when children were perishing in the flames, the parents would not allow them to be saved, saying that it was better for them to die, than to be tortured and rot alive in the «Houses for Children».

This is what the «extremely tactless» report, based on official documents that are preserved in the files of the Commissariat of Education, has to say about the care the children enjoy at the hands of Soviet authorities. And the unparalleled and gruesome horror of the «Childrens' Houses» was made a pretext for a world-wide, glorious and noisy self-advertisment by the «Workmen's» and «Peasants'» government. The Government treated the most heinous of all its crimes as its greatest merit and glory, as an example to the entire world. The cynicism and impudence of these political sharks is without precedent, has no limits and bears no justification.

The number of homeless children is steadily increasing: in 1917, in Moscow, these children averaged about 1-2%. In 1920, as the result of Civil War, and of economic decay, the proportion increased to 25-30% and according to some other statistics even to 40%.

School Education. — The school education of the rising generation in Russia is on a par with all the other aspects of Russian life. We will commence our investigation with the Government's assignments for education.

	Roubles	% of the total budget
1912	170,206,000	6.37
1914	258,605,000	7.21
1916	270,775,000	8.24
1918	3,074,843,000	6.58
1919	17.279,374,000	8.02
1920	114,366,070,000	10.95

The relative amount alloted to education in 1920 is greater than that applied to the same purpose in the last year of the Tsarist regime. However, after a through examination, not of the sums assigned, but of the actual outlay, we come to the conclusion that the relative expenditure of the autocratic government is the greater. Under the latter, the full amount of the sums assigned was issued by the Treesury and disbursed in accordance with the estimates. At present, the money issued by the Treasury for educational purposes stands below the sums assigned, and the actual outlay at the places of their destinations is even less. In the first half of June 1920, instead of the 1.5 milliards of roubles allotted, the Treasury transferred 1.2 milliards to the localities in which the outlay on education was authorised: in the second half of the same month 500 millions instead of 1.5 milliard were issued. In the localities to which the transfer was made and which were invariably short of funds, part of the money was spent on more urgent needs. Moreover if the gold standard is applied to soviet milliards, the sums assigned for education become totally insignificant: the assignment equals: 43.3 million gold roubles in 1918; 43.5 million gold in 1919 and 24.3 millions in 1920. In the latter year the expenditure was half of what it was in 1916.

The decline of education becomes still more evident, when the supply of stationary is considered. The following table gives the figures of the demand and supply of writing materials for 1919:

	Demand per scholar	Amount issued
Paper	30 sheets	15 sheets
Copybooks	3 »	1 for 2 scholars
Pencils	3 »	1 for 60 »
Pen nibs	17 »	1 for 22 »
Inkpots	1 »	1 for 100 »

The eloquence of these figures will be increased, if we add that the articles mentioned were unprocurable in the market except in large towns and at exorbitant prices. The vast majority of scholars in Russia had to content themselves with the supplies issued by the Government; education became impossible for the greater part of the rising generation.

Primary education suffered most. Primary school buildings were invariably unheated and never repaired: school books, blackboard, chalk, ink were non-existent, and paper, pencils and pens extremely scarce. Teaching took place in peasants' houses, and 30 or 40 scholars were crowded into a small room. The teachers were in a state of pauperism, lacked boots and clothes, and, in many instances, the girl teachers prostituted themselves. For six months at a time the school personnel received no salary and usually no ration as well. The more energetic element among the masters abandoned the unremunerative profession: those who remain are overworked, and their efficiency deteriorates. «Nowadays, the teacher himself must be taught» is the comment of the peasants; they refuse to send their children to school, as the modern conditions of education are hopelessly inefficient (1).

In frequent instances a level surface covered with snow in winter, or with sand in spring and autumn, was utilised for spelling lessons. Both master and scholars used sticks to write with. In winter time, badly clothed and famished, the teacher and children turned blue with cold, working on these improvised, open air blackboards. In the better equipped schools a white-washed wall serves as blackboard and charcoal is used instead of chalk. «Abolition of Illiteracy» was one of the slogans of the

(1) «The peasants do not appreciate our schools and feel no respect for them», was the admission of Lunatcharsky at the first All-Russian Conference on Communistic Party Propaganda in the Villages (1920). The peasants objected to the abolition of Divinity lessons as well as to the low standard of the teachers.

Soviet Government: the peasant turned it into «abolition of literacy»: and the latter version is certainly the more correct.

The above quoted report, compiled by the Commissariat of Education, but never published in Russia, corroborates the decay of primary education in the following words: «It is unpleasant to have to state that the schools also... are forgotten and neglected. All the best school buildings are occupied by military offices: when vacated by the latter the houses are a heap of ruins, lacking doors and windows, with the ceilings and floors demolished. We met with such conditions in the Don and the Kuban, where school buildings, unimpaired by cold and damp, are rendered unfit for use by military occupation. The existing schools are never heated; no food is issued to the children. In places where the possibility of organising school work exists, nothing can be accomplished on account of the total lack of the teaching personnel; the teachers desert the schools, as the salary is inadequate and material conditions impossible.

It has been ascertained, through information collected by the Department of the Single School, that the position of the staff of teachers is disastrous. The wages of a master vary between 2140 and 2616 roubles per month, and he gets no rations. Yet even this absurd salary is often six or eight months in arrear. Complaints from the central provinces confirm this.

Such precarious material conditions have driven the school master to seek other employment; in the villages he becomes a slave of the peasant, and, in return for a piece of bread, is forced to teach the children in accordance with the orders of the tight-fisted villager. In these circumstances, it is not surprising that notwithstanding the official abolition of this subject a course of Divinity and the Gospel is being taught in the village schools... Many honest schoolmasters are literally dying of starvation or are driven to suicide»...

The terms of this report leave no doubt that no organised system of primary education exists any longer in Russia (1).

At the same time, the peasants are beginning to realise the benefits of learning. «The bolsheviks would never have got hold of us like that, had we been educated», they say. «The thirst for knowledge is immense», states the report of the Commissariat of Education, «we are daily in receipt of information that, regardless of difficulties and the famine, in spite of the ravages and disorganisation due to Civil war,.. the peasants are building new schools at their own expense». In Southern Russia, peasant children frequently enter the grammar schools, where, in some places, they reach to 40% or 60% of the scholars. In the province of Volhunia three or four peasant families unite and engage a governess from the town. In numerous villages the united efforts of the community defray the cost of erecting and running a school. Some of the traits of future Russia are visible in the peasants' thirst for knowledge.

Secondary education has also suffered; however, the destruction is less than in the case of elementary schools. All private secondary schools have been abolished; the 7th and 8th forms in the school have been done away with. The new system of tutorage consisted in «binding» the master to a fixed group of pupils (to a class) whom he instructed on all the subjects of the school curriculum, from the first to the last class. In 1919 and 1920, in consequence of the protests of the masters, this reform was partly abolished and the system is now only applied to the lower forms. In the same year the study of languages was cancelled and lessons in sociology took their place. «Labour processes» were greatly indulged in: the pupils had to scrub floors in schoolrooms, corridors and lavatories, to clear the streets from snow and ice, to hew and carry wood; for hours or even days on end,

(1) Free education has just been abolished (July 1922) by a decree of the Soviet government and the new Budget makes practically no provision at all for this. (Publisher's note).

the pupils would have to wait in front of the stores where pennibs,pencils and ink were issued. The scholars used to be attached to government offices: famished and badly clothed they would have to spend their time in carrying and delivering letters about town. Instances were not infrequent where pupils would be expelled en masse for being «politically untrustworthy». Many of the school buildings were occupied by government offices (usually military): in the remaining schools lessons were carried on from early morning to late at night, as three or four groups of pupils had to use the same schoolroom; there was no time even to air the rooms properly.

The system of combined education of the sexes that was summarily introduced placing boys and girls of fifteen and sixteen in the same class, resulted in widespread immorality. The teaching personnel foresaw the consequences and protested against the abrupt innovation: but the government persisted.

Nevertheless, everything considered, the extent of the disorganisation of secondary education and grammer schools is considerably less than in the case of primary instruction and the corresponding institutions.

The evil effects are even less marked in the case of higher (university) education inasmuch as the principles of communism were applied in this sphere as late as 1920, and up to the close of that year university training retained its former methods. On the other hand the number of universities was increased from ten to twenty-three in 1921-22. In the opening months of 1921 ninety higher educational institutions were represented at a «Conference on University Education» at Moscow. But... in the new universities lectures are read by grammar-school masters, district agricultural advisers or persons still less fitted for the work; in one of them a man, generally known to have set fire to his house in view of the insurance premium, to have robbed his mistress and committed other misdeeds, was placed

at the head. The man was a good communist and was considered to be gifted with «organising abilities». At Ekaterinburg, the local authorities decreed a university with lectures on 32 subjects; the old and efficient university of Perm now being deemed superfluous, it was only saved from complete annihilation by intercession from Moscow.

The decree of the 6th of December 1920 created a commission for the purpose of radically remodelling the curriculum of the higher schools. The attention of the commission mainly centred on the universities. It was decided to transform them into institutions where the practical knowledge, required by Soviet Republic officials would be taught; schools of bureaucracy were to be instituted in the place of universities that served the purpose of developing and disciplining the process of thought. The change was effected. Officially the universities lost their former character (1).

The medical school was least affected by the new system. Social science was substituted for instruction in law and philo-

(1) In actual practice, the former system and aims of education will be retained by the universities for a long time to come. The want of substitutes renders the government powerless to replace the university professors and lecturers. The latter will naturally carry on their work as formerly.

The following extract was written in the beginning of 1920 by Bogolepov, one of the most faithful and active supporters of the theory of «communisation» in conjunction with the universities. He was a solicitor and received immediate promotion to a professorship. «We must acknowledge the fact that a lengthy period will elapse before we manage to create a class of red (revolutionary) specialists. Therefore it is of the utmost importance for us to get full control of university education: the difficulties are however very great. The university professors are the most reactionary, the most politically stagnant and, simultaneously, the most intellectual group of the bourgeoisie; they perceive very clearly how important it is for the proletariat to gain control of higher education and they oppose it by every possible means.

We must state to our shame that the professors are far from being unsuccessful, for, during the past three years of Soviet régime, the universities have not changed».

logy. The former consisted of four subjects: law, economics, pedagogics and literary arts. Students of law were to supply judges for soviet law-courts; the economic branch was to prepare specialists on professional unions, industry, agriculture and statistics. The third subdivision was to provide teachers and administrators on education, and students in the last branch were to become teachers of Russian and other languages. A minimum of knowledge on general subjects was fixed for students in all faculties of the universities. This included «Soviet Constitution», «Darwinism», «Historical Materialism», «the History of Socialism» and the «History of the Russian Revolution». With the exception of the subjects having no relations to politics, only rabid adherents of Marxian doctrines were allowed to lecture on subjects included in the obligatory minimum. In order to create a sufficient staff of such lecturers the «Institute of Red Professors» was established in Moscow in 1921.

As a result of the reform of university Education, lectures on the general history of Eastern nations were abolished in the Lasarev Institute of Foreign Langages, and a course of revolutionary history of the same nations introduced.

The reform cancelled the freedom of instruction. «As regards university education», says Lunatcharsky in a report of the Commissariat of Education, covering a period from 1917 to 1920, «*we have definitely renounced our favourable attitude towards the autonomy of science*. Autonomy of science is incompatible with the dictatorship of the proletariat, although, as a general rule, we consider it natural and desirable. Under existing conditions the struggle against independence in the sphere of science is a struggle against the enslavement of science by the bourgeoisie and its hangers-on».

The proclamation of the Commission for the Reform of Higher Education states the reasons for the abolition of freedom in matters of science and advocates the introduction of this measure.

«In a community composed of classes, science is never free and neutral, nor can it be such. The conceptions of the contending social groups are reflected in scientific, artistic and philosophical thought. Russia has overthrown the bourgeoisie and is passing through a period of transition, characterised by a struggle against the remnants of the past and by the tremendous effort that is demanded from the nation. In such conditions the Government would be pursuing a suicidal policy if it allowed freedom in the sphere of scientific instruction and research *(sic!)*. The Dic-dictatorship of the Proletariat has been proclaimed in politics and economics: *now the Soviet Government must openly declare that this dictatorship applies to science as well*».

Bogolepov, the present rector of the Moscow University, introduced the theory of «the dictatorship of the proletariat» in scientific questions by rigorously and consecutively making the professors lecture in accordance with, and strictly withn the limits set by, the text books approved by the Government. For the same reasons of «scientific policy» A. A. Kisevetter, the best Russian contemporary historian, is only permitted to lecture on the period up to the siege of Sebastopol in 1854. The later stages of Russian history are regarded as a matter too propitious for the development of the baccilus of «counter-revolution». As a lecturer sufficiently «trustworthy» to deal with later years of Russian history could not be found, that period of history has practically ceased to exist in the university curriculum.

The higher technical educational institutions are better preserved than the universities. The former are materially better off, their educational schemes were less interfered with and as a general rule tuition was to a great extent independent. Amongst the higher technical schools, the Petrovsko-Rasoomovskaya Agricultural Academy occupies a very prominent place, both for the intensity and success of its educational work. The administrative staff was elective and composed of professors, who

staunchly defended the rights of the Academy and resisted all interference into its affairs. Towards the beginning of December 1921, after a perquisition over the entire Academy and the professors' quarters that lasted for three days, and after numerous arrests amongst the students, the administration had to resign. It was replaced by a new one, very much «communised», and the life and work of the Academy entered into a newer and sadder phase.

Publishing. — The printing press has been nationalised in Russia and serves only the purposes of the communist party. Therefore, a new book in Russia is a rarity; books that would really reflect and respond to the questions of the moment have utterly vanished.

The publishing industry, like all else in Russia, is crumbling to ruins; there is no paper and ink, a general dearth of skilled labour prevails, and the labour that is to be found has greatly lost its efficiency. The volume of production has steadily decreased; the numbers of copies (in thousands) produced being as follows: in 1916, 16,240; in 1917, 12,297; in 1918, 7,522; in 1919, 3,827; in 1920, 2,488.

When I left Moscow, there remained several private publishing concerns that had not been closed by the Government, but they were all very badly off: in order to publish a book, it was necessary to pass the communistic censor and obtain the permission of the government publishing department; then permission to use the machinery would have to be obtained from the polygraphical department. When the book was finally printed, the Government arbitrarily estimated its value, and the price thus established was compulsory for the publishers. Under such conditions it is difficult to work successfully.

The work of private publishing firms, when they are thus controlled by the Government, entirely depends upon the latter's policy in literature. What was this policy?

The governmental departments that regulated the book market, invariably, both in the capitals and provinces, had communists at their head; the main object of literature, for these departments, was to strengthen the position of communism in Russia. Books fulfilling this condition were easily allowed to be published, whilst those that did not further the object pursued, were unconditionally «vetoed».

The second principle originated in the professional interest of the State Publishing Department. Naturally concerned with the success of its work, the latter saw in private publishing concerns dangerous competitors, whose activities limited the work and influence of the State Department. Hence, it naturally developed a tendency to «squeeze» its rival.

A third motive may be added: authors very unwillingly and only in cases of extreme need addressed themselves to the State Department, whilst the private publishers were overloaded with work. According to data furnished by the All-Russian Authors' Union, the private publishing concerns had over one thousand and five hundred manuscripts, dealing only with art and criticism, at their disposal. Such an attitude of the authors towards the State Department also created a desire in the latter to «squeeze» the authors as well.

The combination of these three causes defined the policy of the State Publishing Department. As in all other State departments, its activity was arbitrary and not unfrequently even contrary to the interests of the State. In 1920 a pamphlet by P. Vitiazev, «Private publishing in Soviet Russia», was published semi-illegally without passing through the communistic censor: the following are a few illustrations from it: The publishing firm «Kolos» received, in answer to its application for permission to publish the works of N. K. Mchailovsky, the advice: «To use the paper at its disposal for propaganda literature»: the firm «Alkonost» was forbidden to publish a book, the type of which was already

set, although the book contained nothing contrary to «the interests of the State»: the State Publishing Department attempted to appropriate the «Memoirs of V. N. Figner», although she had sold them to the publishers «Zadruga»: when M. V. Sabachnikov published Strasbuger's «Text book of Botany», the State Department ordered the publishers' name on the edition to be replaced by its own: and so on. M. Vitiazev's pamphlet contains dozens of facts similar to those I have quoted.

The following is an episode connected with P. A. Krapotkine. In 1920 the latter permitted the anarchists' private printing concern to re-print three of his books («Mutual assistance as a factor in evolution», «Fields, Factories and Workshops» and «The Great French Revolution»). The State Publishing Department refused to authorise the printing of the books, as it desired to publish them itself. It was impossible to publish the books without Krapotkine's consent — he was too salient a figure for that . The State Publishing Department adressed itself to Krapotkine, offering to purchase the rights on all his books for one million roubles (a large sum at that time). In spite of the privations Krapotkine was enduring, he declined the offer on the ground that, during the whole of his life, he had considered the State the most bitter enemy of humanity and, personally, of his own as well. «I have fought the State in words and writing during the whole of my life, and I should be a traitor to the cause to which my life is devoted, if I sold my works to the worst of all States», he wrote. Having received such a refusal, the State Department finally forbade the private concerns to publish Krapotkine's books, that consequently remain unpublished to the present day.

The State's policy and its results are well estimated and characterised in the «Memorandum of the All-Russian Union of Authors» (artists), presented to Lunatcharsky in December 1920. The memorandum is very restrained, but the indignation

and wrath its authors felt are not disguised. The following is an extract from the memorandum: «At present publishing concerns are being closed, our last reserves of paper confiscated, printing presses shut, and the printing of manuscripts is being stopped: permissions for publications already granted are being cancelled and even contracts which the State had concluded with authors broken... Russian artistic, critical, historical and philosophical literature is being finally suppressed. From its former position of world-wide importance Russian literature is being curtailed to the limits of a private diversion, that may be enjoyed only by a small group of men who have the possibility of hearing one another's manuscripts. History will not pass over the fact, that in 1920, during the first quarter of the 20th Century, Russian authors, deprived of all other means of making themselves heard by the public, have written their books by hand in one copy and sold them thus, as used to be done in the days when no printing press existed.

The policy of the State Publishing Department has consciously silenced Russian literature; books do not exist at present, as far as the Russian author is concerned. With the deepest indignation we notice that the restraints placed upon literature are taking the aspect of conscious suppression».

The «Suppression of Russian Literature», mentioned in the memorandum of the All-Russian Union of Authors, is realised not only by prohibitions to publish new books; those already in existence are also being suppressed.

Towards the end of 1920 the Department of political Instruction issued a circular to its provincial branches ordering an inspection of all public librairies, with the object of removing from them: (1) Immoral, (2) Religious, (3) Counter-Revolutionary books and 4) books dealing with social questions, if the views expressed by the authors were contrary to those of the government. Five copies of each book confiscated were to be kept in special locked

and sealed store houses, whilst all surplus copies were to be sent to the Central Stationery Department as material for the manufacture of paper. As the result of this circular, an enormous quantity of books perished; the loss in the old religious books found in the churches and monasteries was particularly great.

In the libraries of the former primary schools (parish, zemstvo and governmental) similar «work» had already been carried out in 1918, 1919, and 1920 by the village «Revolutionary Committee Soviet» and «Committee of the Poor» on their own initiative. Books on religious and moral subjects, including the Bible, were burnt in the streets. No one has estimated the quantity of books thus destroyed, but it must have been enormous.

The following instance, given by the «Red Newspaper» in January 1920, illustrates the work of Soviet offices: «In 1919, owing to the insufficiency of paper, we adopted heroical measures and resorted to the old archives. As the result, 50% to 70% of all the paper we now use is made out of the rubbish we extracted out of them. But, together with this rubbish, the paper-mill has consumed such documents as Government deeds of the 18th Century. On one occasion, dozens of pouds of a magnificient French edition of Turgenev were rescued out of the mill. Countless editions of Poushkine and Lermontov disappear there, in spite of the fact that the «Narcompros» (1) is continually republishing them. Books are thus destroyed not in stray volumes, but by the ton. A mass of text books and technical books, which are so badly needed, is also to be found at the mill, and, not infrequently, even bibliographical rarities. Neither is revolutionary literature, edited by the Petrosoviet, spared. In September 1920 the mill «Comunar» was supplied with a ton of «The labour of the Conference on Cattle Rearing» that took place in January of the same year. When one of the members of the conference was informed of this he said: «That

(1) Abbreviation for «People's Commissariat of Education».

is impossible, as the edition was all distributed and we are now publishing a second one».

Scientific and artistic creative work. — In dealing with the creation of new scientific and artistic values, I must begin by confessing that I am not in possession of sufficient data to give a complete and convincing account on this subject. The «Suppression of Literature» spoken of in the memorandum of the All-Russian Authors'Union, applies not only to artistic, political, historical and philosophical books, but scientific ones as well. The publication of various «papers» formerly issued by our universities and scientific institutions, as well as by different societies, has ceased; books dealing with novel aspects of scientific problems, or raising new ones, have also ceased to appear.

In order to understand and know what was going on and being done in scientific and artistic circles, it was necessary to belong to these circles or to be in constant personal touch with them. I was not in a position to fulfil either of these conditions and, therefore, the sketch I am able to give will be very incomplete and, I fear, inconclusive. However, as I had some connexion with these circles and knew something of them I feel it my duty to inform the reader of what has been created in Russia in those spheres of thought, where «moth and rust do not corrupt».

The information that has reached me through the Commissariat of Agriculture and Education as well as through my scientific and artistic friends, leaves no doubt about the strength of spirit these circles displayed, and shows, that in spite of adverse conditions, work and research has been diligently carried on.

During the time I was employed at the Commissariat of Agriculture, I was constantly in receipt of information about the energetic work accomplished at Agricultural Experimental Farms, on new and old scientific problems. Research work for methods of raising the productivity of land never stopped for one moment. In general, the activity of experimental farms,

in spite of the very difficult position in which they found themselves, owing to the shortage of funds, seeds, instruments and books, and of the hardships the staff had to endure, has not only not decreased, but, on the contrary, has even developed. During the month of May, an All-Russian Conference of the representatives of Experimental Farms took place in Moscow. I was unable to attend personally at the conference, but I saw several members of it: all of them were very optimistic about the result of the conference, during which they had come to the conclusion that the work of experimental farms was progressing. During the four years of disorder in Russia, new and important discoveries have been made in counteracting the effects of droughts, in the rotation of crops, technique of tilling and even in the introduction of new plants.

I often used to meet one of the officials of the Commissariat of Education who occupied a high post and was in connexion with the universities and scientific institutions. To my regret, I omitted to note in writing the facts he gave me concerning the work of Russian scientists and scholars, but I clearly remember the wonder and veneration with which he spoke of the work they were doing in the present appalling circumstances. The 1,500 manuscripts, awaiting their turn at private publishing firms, also bear witness to an unflagging intellectual effort. L. Lvov, who has just met a person newly arrived from Moscow, writes in the «Rul»: «A glow of light comes from Moscow. M. N. has brought many manuscripts with him—some of them his own—all written under incredible conditions of life. From the talk I had with him I gathered that even the Inferno reigning in Russia has been powerless to quell our Russian spirit, and that starving, half dead men find the strength to carry on their creative spiritual work». Lvov next quotes a passage from the pen of one of those dauntless men: «We are physically exhausted, but spiritually alive and unflinching; our attention is centred

on the origin of the world crisis. I am more persuaded than ever that its causes are to be sought in historical religion and spiritual culture. The crisis is extensive and deep; each man can grasp it fully only in the heart of his own country... For those who have kept alive, the ordeal is almost unbearable, but it gives a strength of purpose and of resistance that are invincible — and this is precisely what our wonderful country needed most».

The facts and instances quoted obviously by no means define the volume or the quality of the spiritual creative work now being accomplished in Russia. But they leave no room for doubt as to the existence of such work and of the unbroken spirit of its authors. *Russia's creative spirit has not perished in the catastrophe — it is alive and vigilant.*

The same unbroken and living spirit is apparent in the new, chiefly verbal, Russian literature. The latter does not contain any lasting spiritual values and is poor in form; but it is abundant and popular and is currently quoted amongst all the classes of the population. It differs widely in form and contents, ranging from songs, parodies of revolutionary hymns, parables, fables, poems, to anecdotes, jokes of the initial letters of soviet institutions, witty epigrams, stories; I have heard one musical comedy «A meeting of the Sovnarkom» and two large poems, one of which is popular in the villages («Who lives well in Sovdepia?»), whilst the other is a favourite in the towns («The adventures of Karl Marx in Soviet Russia»). This new literature deals with the Russian disorders, the Government's ignorance, the power of the Jews, the growth of theft and corruption, immorality and methods of administration of the government, its extortions and wastefulness, the educational system, the ruling party, peasants' and workmen's revolts and so on. It is too long to enumerate the various topics dealt with in rhyme, but no matter what the contents, and what form they take, there is almost invariably a humourous strain in them.

Laughter, whether ironical or satirical, is the fundamental trait of modern Russian literature. It is indeed good when a man can laugh; it shows that he is alive. *When a nation, in the throes of a crisis, like to the present one in Russia, manages to laugh over its calamities, it means that the national spirit is unbroken.*

PART II

I

PSYCHO-SOCIAL MODIFICATIONS

Dishonesty and corruption. — Even before the Revolution, scrupulous honesty never was a distinctive trait of the Russian national character; graft and bribery have always played a large part in Russian public life. The corruption of the administration dates back into history; it originated in the low standard of culture and in the absence of any political rights amongst the population, in a powerful and badly paid bureaucracy. In the period of Russian history subsequent to the reforms, when compartive freedom of the press, law-courts and local self-governement were introduced, especially after the Duma had been instituted, the evil began to diminish rapidly. At the time of the fall of the Tzarist régime bribery still flourished amongst the police only.

The revolution has caused Russia to recede considerably. Every form of dishonesty is now widely developed in all the branches of Russian life. It may be said without exaggeration that corruption is general and all-pervading; it has assumed the character of an epidemic disease and takes every conceivable form: bribery with and without exaction, defrauding the government and theft among private individuals.

In the communist state corruption is omnipresent. Bribes are received openly and secretly, directly and indirectly, by separate individuals and collective bodies; they are acceptable in the guise of money, eatables, cigarettes etc. — possibly natural products are even preferred. In present-day Russia corruption is the essense of life; every transaction begins and ends by a bribe. This holds good not only in the relations between government offices and private individuals, but in government inter-departmental transactions as well. Even in far off times, bribery was not so potent and business between the various branches of the government used to be carried on without it.

The following facts will show the extent of the evil.

At the close of 1920 the Commissariat of Foreign Trade became especially notorious in Moscow. As this Commissariat had the control over the entire foreign trade, it could supply adroit and unscrupulous persons with unique opportunities of earning an easy, certain and very considerable profit. The celebrity of the Supreme Economic Council soon faded before that of the Commissariat of Foriegn Trade.

For the sake of brevity, I shall give only one example of the activity of the latter. In April 1921 the first consignment of pen-nibs, purchased abroad, arrived in Moscow. 6,000 gross of these pens were issued to the Commissariat of Education for the schools. When the goods were inspected by specialists they were declared unfit for use. 25% of the pens had no slit in the nibs and the points of 75% were bent and crossed. Not a single one was serviceable. The pens had been bought in Sweden and were of Swedish, German and possibly Finnish manufacture.

The reputation of the Commissariat of Foreign Trade finally became an open scandal. The «Peasants' and Workmen's Inspection» held an inquiry on the matter, some arrests followed and the case was reported to the Soviet of People's Commissars.

Dzerjinsky was directed to take up the matter. The Che-ka brought such flagrant corruption to light that a third investigation by a commisson of specially trustworthy communists was considered necessary. Numerous arrests took place, but in a week's time all the «responsible» members of the communist party who had been arrested in conjunction with the three investigations were again at liberty. «Each of them has paid from two to four millions to the Che-ka», was the opinion in communist circles, «and has received his freedom with the insistent advice to go abroad as soon as possible».

No business whatever could be transacted with the Supreme Ecomonical Council in a normal way; but the Council became easily accessible and business would be rapidly accomplished when bribery was resorted to. Not merely authorisation for the issue of machinery and spare parts, raw materials, manufactured goods and implements of production could be obtained, but commodities could be ordered from abroad and payments secured; it was even possible to forward necessary directions to local branches of the Supreme Economic Council by means of a bribe.

Everything could be had in Soviet Russia with the help of corruption. A private railway carriage for travel could be obtained at the Commissariat of Transport, an acquittal or a lenient sentence could be bought at the law-courts, an authorisation for the publication of pamphlets or books at the Government Publishing Department, the right to use any given publishing concern at the Polygraphic one; alcohol for «technical requirements» could be got in the same way at the Central Alcohol Department or at its local branches; a bribe secured a suit of clothes or a pair of boots at the «Peasants' and Workmen's Single Co-operation Society» and so forth.

In the early part of 1921, the Central Fur Department received about a hundred bottles of wine from the cellars of the Commis-

sariat of Health. The wine was issued by the orders of a person (1) of «Immortal» renown in whose honour a species of vermin has been re-named in Soviet Russia. The evening the wine was issued, a motor belonging to the Commissariat of Furs conveyed thirty or forty bottles to Semashko's apartements. Service for service: Semashko issued the wine and in return his friends shared the spoils with him.

Some time previously, a similar transaction had taken place between the Commissariat of Foreign Affairs and the Chief Department of Textiles. The former indented for and received large quantities of tapestry hangings, carpets etc. from the warehouses of the latter for furnishing the apartment of an employe. The day of the issue, a considerable part of the furnishing was divided among the members of the Department of Textiles and several responsible «Soviet partisans».

Although the Moscow «Che-ka» was aware of these proceedings it was helpless to put a stop to them even had it wished to do so, as the leading communist circles enjoy complete immunity from all molestation by the «Che-ka».

The proceedings of the Commissariat of Education in February 1921 were even more brilliant.

The transport horses belonging to this institution were in such a state of exhaustion through lack of fodder that all transport ceased; the animals would stagger and drop when put into harness. After a lengthy consideration of the matter, Litkins, Deputy Commissar of Education, assigned 20 million roubles for the purchase of hay at market price, on condition that the place where the forage would be acquired was to be made known to him. The persons in charge of the transaction managed, however,

(1) The person in question is Semashko, Commissar for Health, whose distinguished labours for the sanitary welfare of the population have been followed by such brillant results that throughout the whole of Russia, the louse now goes by the name of «semashko».

to evade the condition and also to conceal the fact of the purchase until the hay was stored in the Commissariat of Education.

When the hay had been safely stored and the accounts audited and passed, the tongues of the purveyors began to wag. It was ascertained that the fodder had been received from the stores of the Transport Department of the Moscow Sovdep, i.e. from the very department whose duty it was to supply the Moscow horse transport with horses and forage, and which had refused to provide the Commissariat of Education with hay, as none had been «available». After the assignment of 20 millions for the purpose, the hay was found. It was found because five members of the Transport Department had received 10 millions out of the 20; several millions fell to the share of the official in charge of the warehouses and so forth.

In the instance just described, the different departments were involved. However, bribes are as common in the dealings between the various branches of the same department. In the Moscow Tribunal, during the trial of the members of the Chief Department for Fuel, a disclosure was made to the effect that the Chief Department for Tea (the Fuel and Tea Departments are both branches of the Supreme Council) had to supply the members of the former with tea and coffee in order to obtain the necessary fuel to keep industrial concerns running.

In 1920 the authorities instituted a special Commissariat of «Peasants' and Workmen's Inspection» whose function was to suppress general fondness for those «commercial enterprises». No transaction dealing with purchase and confiscation of property and goods, money payments etc. could be effected without the authorization of the «Inspection». The innovation led to unexpected results: the «exchange of liberalities» assumed a much larger scale, as the «Peasants' and Workmen's Inspectors» took an active part in them. Those inspectors who were not actively engaged in the proceedings played a passive role. I know of a

number of institutions that paid the inspectors from 150 to 500 thousand roubles a month merely to keep them «neutral».

The epidemic of theft was especially virulent in the stores and warehouses of the Republic. The officials in charge of the depots steal, their assistants steal, the controllers steal. To be on the safe side, they share their spoils with their chiefs; the «Peasants' and Workman's Inspection» also receives its share. To conceal the traces of the theft, paraffin is diluted with water, salt and sugar are moistened, butter is transferred into heavy boxes which may have been used for herrings or soap. If these expedients are insufficient, the warehouses are flooded, set on fire, a burglary is alleged, or the officials themselves vanish.

Corruption also takes the form of blackmail. Exactions are carried out at the point of arms; by threats of denunciation to the «Che-ka». In many instances even threats are not resorted to as the mandate, or the leather coat and despatch case (1), suffice to coerce a terrorized and defenceless population. Officials of all ranks from highest to lowest practise extortion.

All the examples given above deal with corruption in the governmental institutions and among government officials but these were certainly not the only ones to plunder the «property of the nation». The workmen employed in nationalised factories did as much. The bolsheviks incited the population to despoil the capitalist robber; the result was that the workmen mercilessly plundered the property of factories, such as fuel, raw materials, implements and manufactured goods. Theft began on the first day of the bolshevik régime and continued without respite through all the years of Soviet rule. Copper parts of a plant were used for making cigarette lighters, which are now met with in the remotest corner of Russia; iron was utilised for lamps, kitchen utensils, buckets; connecting belts were turned into soles; the leather and

(1) These articles are the usual attributes of a communist. (Translator).

upholstery of railway carriages served as material for coats and breeches and so on.

During the unorganised mass demobilisation of the armies in 1917 and 1918 the soldiers joined with the workmen in looting the «national property». The soldiers carried away arms, machinery from the military workshops, boilers, kettles, harness etc.

Many painful reminiscences of the years spent in the communist State are connected with the widespread theft that prevailed among the town population. The thought that humiliating and intolerable realities of Russian life should have driven even the most respected people to dishonesty is at times almost unbearable. Not merely the average man but persons distinguished by their work and services in former public life have become thieves. If men of that kind have resorted to stealing, the reader will easily picture to himself how immensely theft is developed among the average town population. Parents teach their children to steal; and the coming generation is contaminated as well. The Russian villages are also afflicted by the terrible scourge. Wheat, flour, bread, clothes, harness, fowls, sheep, even cows and horses are the object. The cows and horses are usually led away, killed and skinned.

The confession is a painful one, but it must be plainly said that *Russia has become the land of general theft.* Although the former conception of the immorality and shamefulnes of stealing is still alive, it is materially weakened and could not be otherwise, for the *present conditions of Russian life make honesty impossible, and stealing becomes a necessity.*

General lowering of moral standards. — At the same time, mutual aid and assistance among the population have been greatly developed during these years of suffering and distress. Services and loans are rendered and advanced to friends in a spirit of complete disinterestedness, and contin-

ual fear of starvation has not been able to extinguish the last spark of humanity. But such generosity is practised towards friends and acquaintances only. Outsiders meet with no compassion. If feelings of sympathy have become stronger and more acute, their sphere of action is restricted. Sympathy in Russia is taking a form it acquired during the war; for friends it grows more intense and active; in regard to enemies compassion has practically ceased to exist.

During the winter 1919 - 1920, in the large Siberian villages, soldiers frozen to death used to be picked up at the very doors of well heated peasant houses. Eye-witnesses affirmed that in some villages the bodies could be counted by the score. The owners of the houses had refused to allow the men to enter for the night, whereas formerly the same villages would generously feed the gangs of convicts, who were marched through Siberia on foot; in former days, at night time, bread used to be placed outside the houses for runaway convicts. According to the information of an experienced examining magistrate, the greater part of the frequent robberies that took place in Moscow in 1921 were commited by boys of 16 and 20 (the generation that had grown up during the war) and many of the crimes were accompanied by murder for which there could be no motive. Formerly the average criminal was of maturer age; the percentage of murders two or three times less and their motives palpable.

The official newspaper, «Izvestia Vtzika»(1) draws attention to the increase of crime both in 1921 and in 1922: «murders, armed robberies and burglaries have become considerably more frequent» The official also states that the majority of the crimes are perpetrated by youths. «Children form a considerable percentage of the criminals». «In numerous cities the population is living in perpetual fear of armed robbers who carry away the scanty

(1) All-Russian Executive Committee News.

remaining property of the citizens», is the statement of the «Isvestia». To my certain knowledge, in many towns in Southern Russia the doors and shutters of the houses are barred and bolted after eight o'clock at night, and on no consideration is a stranger allowed to enter, for fear of robbery and murder.

The conditions are no better in the villages. Communications similar to the one quoted below, from Smolensk, are frequently met with in every local newspaper, and persons living in the villages and acquainted with village life corroborate the facts of the case. «The entire rising generation, starting with boys of 12 and 15, resembles a demoralised rowdy horde. The village youth is the terror of the community. Drinking, debauchery and attacks on neighbouring villages are general. Foul language is the only thing one hears in the streets. Violence against women is an every-day occurrence, and the crimes remain unpunished. The use of bad language had grown considerably during the war; at presant even village girls have acquired the habit, and the foulest oaths are calmly and naturally intermingled with ordinary speech.» This is a new development and one of the undeniable «gains» of the revolution.

The coarse and brutal mentality acquired by the village population becomes especially evident during peasant revolts and Jewish pogroms. During the widespread agrarian disturbances of 1902 cases of personal outrages committed against the landowners were rare. In 1904-1906 they also formed exceptions. During the last agrarian movements of 1917, personal outrages were more numerous than before as a result of the war. Nevertheless, in 1917, cases when property was destroyed whilst the landowner and his family remained unmolested were so frequent that personal violence cannot be regarded as a general rule. Matters are different at present. Communists and food-tax collectors are massacred wholesale during a revolt, very often most barbarously: noses, ears, lips and arms are cut off; they are burnt or buried

alive, disembowelled and stuffed with corn; strips of skin are cut out of their backs, etc.

In pogroms carried out by bands of revolted peasants, the entire Jewish population in the area is massacred. Neither women, children nor old men are spared. A Jewish lady of my acquantance, who was a member of a Jewish relief organisation, visited localities that had suffered from pogroms. She states that in the province of Minsk she saw boroughs in which the few persons who had managed to hide in the cellars or escape into the fields were the only survivors of several hundreds of Jewish families. Practically the entire Jewish population had perished.

The treatment Jews suffered at the hands of the red army was scarcely better. The route traversed by the cavalry of Boudenny (a red general) from Poland to the Crimean front was marked by the murder of thousands of Jews; thousands of women were outraged and innumerable Jewish boroughs sacked. In Jitomir every new faction that came into power commenced its activity by a pogrom. All such pogroms, whether committed by Poles, Petlura (1) or the Bolsheviks were accompanied by heavy loss of life. Jews used to be murdered in pogroms under the tzarist régime, but the massacres never attained such a scale, nor were they perpetrated with such cool and absolute savagery as in the present time.

The heart of the modern Russian has truly grown hard, callous and stony; his feelings are blunted and his reason dim. And could it be otherwise? The difficulties he contends with are tremendous; so many ideals have been shattered, his losses are so great, that no other alternative seems possible!

The harshness of heart caused by civil war is increased in Russia by the persistent and fanatical propaganda of class

(1) Extreme Ukraine nationalist, leader of a rebellion against the Hetman Scoropadsky in November 1918 and overthrown by the bolshevics in February 1919.

warfare against the proletariat's enemy—the «bourgeoisie». The term «bourgeoisie» included everyone who possessed anything: officers, members of the constitutional-democratic party, the well-to-do peasants, as well as the owners of the factors of production. The class war to which the Government was ceaselessly inciting the population was conceived as undisguised destruction of property and as open murder. Under the influence of the class hatred thus aroused, the uncivilised and uncultured part of the population grew hard and ruthless. *We, who have participated in and who have witnessed the great social experiment, are indeed able to estimate the real «benefits» of the class warfare that has been so assiduously advocated by the majority of socialists.*

In my notes I find a striking narrative of a lady-doctor who worked in a military hospital. I give the story as I took it down when under the fresh impression of the doctor's words:

«I had completed my morning round in the hospital. A new case had been brought in; I had examined and talked to the patient who was a soldier of the «Che-ka» battalion, and as I was leaving his bedside he called me. He was out of bed and following me: «Comrade doctor, may I ask you to let me go home as soon as possible? I really must go on leave». He had dull, coarse features and a worried expression in his eyes. «What is your complaint?». «A catarrh of the respiratory organs; I can't breathe; at times something gets hold of my throat, and I feel as if I should die».

I looked at the patient again: he was of medium height, slightly bent in the shoulders; he had a low forehead, prominent cheek-bones and a powerful neck; he was not older than 25 and strongly built. But his eyes showed him to be ill. I decided that it must be a case of «Globus hysteria».

«What caused you to fall ill?» The man dropped his eyes and began to fidget with his dressing gown.

«You must answer, my dear man—a doctor must know everything». He remained silent with downcast eyes. «Used you

to believe in God?» His eyes were raised in surprise. «Yes». «Do you remember that you were not supposed to conceal anything from the priest at confession?» «I remember». «Well, it's the same thing with a doctor. You must tell me». He was silent for a moment; then in a very low voice he said: «I killed my father», and was silent again. «But how did it happen?» Very slowly and reluctantly, with great difficulty, he told me the story.

«In 1918 I was living in my village. I am member of the communist party and belonged to it at the time, together with several other young men in the village. In the papers we read an order to rise against the kulaks (thrifty peasants), as they were enemies of the Soviets. Well, we had kulaks in our village as well. We discussed the matter and made a list of the kulaks. My father was on the list. And in truth our farm was a good one, possibly the richest in the village. Then we drew lots as to who was to do the killing. I drew my father's name. It wasn't easy, but I belonged to the party and it was the order of the party... Well, I ambushed him near the barn and shot him with a revolver». He stopped and was silent; I could see that he was in pain... He went on a little further speaking even lower than before... «Mother got to know...She went mad with grief. My life became a torture. She would cry, curse me, then lay on the floor as if she were dead. The neighbours treated me like a wild beast; no one would speak to me. I went to Moscow, to the distributing station of the communist party. From there I was sent to the «Che-ka»; I was asked where I had been, what I had done, why I had come to Moscow. When I told them about my father, the comrades *laughed* and said: «Well, if you have killed your father, it will be all the easier for you to kill other people», and I was made executioner. I spent a year at it;—then my breathing went wrong. It grew worse and worse. I was relieved of my duties, but I suffered still more;—horrible dreams came on. A longing took me to see my mother, I asked for leave, instead of

that I was sent to hospital. Comrade doctor, let me go as soon as possible—I must see my mother; I am sick with longing for her»....

When I wrote down these words I imagined that I was dealing with a unique case, in which even in the ruthles conditions of Russian life, human heartlessness had reached its limit. Alas! After having studied the information about Russia, collected abroad, I realised that the occurrence was neither the only one of the same nature nor the limit of savagery. In a paper I came across there were two more instances of parricide among communists, and in one case, in Rostov (Don) the murderer actually boasted of his crime.

The tremendous development of spying and denunciation in Russia also indicates the morale of the population. To spy on a person and denounce him is not considered shameful nowadays. The lowering of moral standards due to «Natural» causes, i. e. to the conditions pravailing in Russian life, is furthered by the official communist code of morals, and the extensive activities of the «Che-ka». The communist code of moral precepts has made a civic virtue of spying and denouncing; the «Che-ka» with its innumerable army of well-paid secret agents has added a material motive. The Moscow «Che-ka» alone employs as many as 30,000 secret agents. I am unable to vouch for the accuracy of this figure, but I am in a position to affirm that the agents belong to a class of persons never employed by the secret service of the tzarist régime. Children, for instance, are widely used for such work. *A special corps of child spies* receive in addition to their wages, a monthly «ration of sweets». Prostitutes form another branch of the service. Their profession is considered to be of State-importance and in consequence they are paid a salary and receive a ration. In many instances, presidents and secretaries of house committees, presidents of committees of villagers and of paupers also belong to the ranks of the secret police.

The general demoralisation can be noticed during political trials in the law courts. In 1919, 1920 and the first half of 1921, the practice of reciprocal denunciations among the accused was resorted to on a scale unknown in any of the political trials under the monarchy.

I could quote endless examples of the general abasement of moral standards in Russia. Frequent instances of harsh treatment meted out to parents who are too old to work, by their grown-up offspring; illustrations of sexual depravity and cruel coarseness (in many cases too indecent for publication) among the pupils of the grammar schools; the savage nature of games played by children, in which «bandits» and «executions» take a prominent part; the disappearance of common politeness and so forth. However, I consider that the cases quoted fully suffice to illustrate the coarseness, the cruel mentality and savage customs that have come into existence under the influence of the «wise» administration of the Kremlin and the «Che-ka».

I am convinced that in altered conditions of life the grown up generation of Russians will rapidly cast off the habits it has acquired during the last years. The customs and conditions of pre-revolutionary existence have left their deposits in the psychics of the adult population, and this factor will prove a sufficient antidote for the poison of the last period. But does the antidote exist in the case of the growing generation? Will it be able to free itself from the filthy moral code of the present days, from the harshness and cruelty accumulated under modern conditions?

Demoralisation of labour. — Russian economic conditions during the recent years are characterised by a marked fall in the efficiency of labour.

Simultaneously with a decline in efficiency, labour has become much more careless. The quality of goods manufactured

in modern Russian industry has greatly deteriorated as compared with former standards, from rails that break in two if dropped from a cart, to matches that refuse to burn. At the same time, the amount of raw material, fuel and motive power necessary for the manufacture of one unit of production has, as a general rule, considerably increased. In the staple chemical industry in 1914 1.30 units were turned out of one unit of raw material; — in 1919 the proportion was 0.53 units of production to 1.00 unit of raw material.

The efficiency of employees has simularly deteriorated. Their work is slovenly, lazy, unsystematic and fitful. It lacks even the most elementary honesty.

The inferior quality of labour is due to many causes, such as lack of proper organisation, horrible conditions of work, low wages and the exhausted state of the workmen. Manufacturing establishments suffer from shortage and low quality of factory plant, raw material, fuel etc.

But the main cause of the phenomenon must be sought in the profound conviction that all work is futile under existing conditions; in the certainty that all effort is unavoidably doomed to failure, or that it will bring evil results. I am unable to gauge to what extent this factor is responsible for the low productivity of labour in the case of the workmen; but in the case of the employees it undoubtedly is the principle cause of their inefficiency.

The conviction of complete irresponsibility and the absence of elementary honesty in regard to their duties naturally have an adverse effect on the psychics of the worker, especially if such conditions become permanent and remain unaltered for years. Carelessness and demoralisation in regard to work gradually become an established and firmly ingrained characteristic of labour. I have often heard even cultured people complain that in Soviet Russia they had lost the habit and practice of work.

This degradation of labour is not permanent; in normal conditions it will vanish again, but a considerable time will be necessary to raise it to its former level. The rising generation, accustomed from childhood to slovenly methods in the schools, will require a longer time than adults to overcome the evil. The youth of Russia will meet the tremendous demands of the future creative effort with a diminished capacity for work.

The habit of bad work is chiefly acquired on service and in the schools. Persons who work at their private business remain free from its demoralizing effects. Correspondingly, the quality of the peasant labour — i. e. of the main social group in Russia has hardly deteriorated at all. The volume of labour has decreased, but, when the peasant works, he works with the same energy, the same efficiency and conscientiousness as before.

Anti-semitism. — Hatred of Jews is one of the most prominent features of contemporary Russian life; possibly even the most prominent. Jews are hated everywhere, in the north, in the south, in the east and in the west. They are detested by all social orders, by all political parties, by all nationalities and by persons of all ages. The reader may think it incredible, but even among the Jews themselves I have met with anti-semitic sentiments, and my notes allow me to affirm that such is the case. I have written down the words of a Jew who plays a prominent part in public life. He has become a communist and occupies an important post in the Soviet Government, though personally he is an exceptionally good and honest man. «I do not wonder at the Jewish pogroms», were his words, «the behaviour of the Jews themselves makes them inevitable and almost lawful. The Russian population would have to lose all its vitality and become completely passive before it gave up pogroms». I have taken down another conversation with a Jewish lady, an intimate

friend of mine. I once asked her what she thought of anti-semitism. This is her answer: «Anti-semitism has always existed in Russia. Even among political exiles, if you went deep enough, you invariably found it in the best of them. At one time this used to hurt me. Not nowadays, however... *It is very likely that if I were not a Jewess myself, I should be anti-semitic.* To be quite frank, even now I am not entirely convinced that I bear no ill-feeling towards the Russian Jews».

The Jews have privileges everywhere. In the food shops, at the railway stations, in the distributing departments of various Sovdeps and so forth. A Jew will always attend to the wants of a compatriot first; he is the first to be received, to be allowed to enter a railway carriage; he will generally meet with no refusal.

Soviet authority, when wielded by a Jew, always assumes the ugliest aspects of Soviet régime. Jewish officials are rude and impertinent, they are the greatest thieves; their arrogance makes them treat the population worse. The possession of power seems to affect them to a greater extent than others. Possibly the reason of this lies in the low standards of culture of the Jews who have now assumed authority — they mostly belong to the class of former shop employees and assistants of dispensing chemists. The pre-revolutionary position of the Jews in Russia that deprived them of any rights, may also have been the cause, — I am unable to say; but all my experience leads me to affirm that the phenomenen is but too real.

National and religious sentiment also tends to enhance the feeling of hatred towards Jews. Possibly the growth of religious feeling in Russia has accentuated the anti-semitic tendencies of the population of Great and Southern Russia.

The growth of religious feeling. A clever and cultured peasant (an atheist), well acquainted with the conditions of life in his province summed up the religious situation thus: «In 1917 faith

was decreasing in the villages. Apathy and indifference to religious matters had set in. Even old women left off going to church. In 1918 and 1919 religion and the ministers of religion were mocked and ridiculed; the village was passing through a period of religious hooliganism. Beginning with the year 1920 a change became apparent and at present (this conversation took place in April 1921) the churches are packed, the population prays fervently, the priests are held in reverence. The same is happening in the towns. Religious indifference is vanishing even among the working class. At one time, anti-religious propaganda was popular and was one of the causes of the religious hooliganism of 1918-19. At present it meets with no success, it annoys people».

The province to which this story applies is situated in the central, corn growing region of Russia. I have also noted the impressions of two persons who frequently visited various districts of the province of Moscow. Both my friends gauged the intensity of religious feeling by the numbers of marriages that took place without a religious ceremony and their evidence is similar: during the first year and a half after the introduction of the Bolshevik régime, as a general rule, marriages in church never took place. Registration by the Elder of the sub-district was considered quite sufficient. In the autumn of 1919, the number of church marriages began to increase; in 1921 every couple, including village communists, was married in church.

Information from the province of Vologda, Poltava and Jaroslav demonstrates a similar evolution of religious feeling. In this case the methods used for the estimation of religiousness were different, and the way the population treated the priests was taken as a gauge. In 1918 and 1919 lands and cattle belonging to priests were confiscated; village moots fixed a very low renumeration for religious services, and so forth. In 1921 the priest was the first man in the village, both as to honour and

wealth. He was given as much land as he required, the land being tilled by the community free of charge. Not only was there no question of confiscating the priest's cattle, but the parish even gave a newly commissioned priest a horse or a cow and sometimes several head of sheep.

The conditions of life of the clergy in the famine stricken towns are probably harder. But even in this case priests have no cause for complaint. «We don't live badly; the parish helps us a great deal», was the answer of a Moscow priest to my question. Another priest also stated that the parishioners were very attentive to the needs of the clergy. He complained, however, of the growing difficulty of conducting the church services. From what he said it became evident that the spiritual demands of the parish had considerably increased. They wanted more than the ordinary routine services; a persistent desire for sermons made itself felt. The former type of sermons that contained nothing but moral lessons no longer satisfied the needs of the population; the priest was called upon for an exposition of the doctrines of faith, founded on comprehensible and universally accepted maxims; he was called upon to prove the compatibility of faith and science, to demonstrate the possibility of combining the principles of religion with the actions and experiences of every day life.

I know little of religious circles, and my information is consequently scanty; nevertheless I have heard of religious and philosophical societies formed by priests and the more cultured parishioners in various towns. The questions discussed in such societies include not only religious doctrine, but practical problems of church reorganisation and reform, so as to bring the church into closer relations with actual conditious of life. In consequence of the new demands of the parish, the mentality of the Russian clergy is becoming more pliable and is keeping in touch with the altered religious demands.

In Moscow, in the winter of 1920-21, the interest in religious lectures was very great, especially when they were conducted by well known lecturers. The exhausted population used to spend several hours in the cold, standing in queues in order to secure a seat.

Religious feeling has also grown amongst the «Intelligentsia»; though it is not so marked as among the peasants and the masses of the town population. Many socialist members of the Intelligentsia not only take a keen interest in religion, but have become believers and, in any case, the former standpoint, according to which all religion is a public evil that distracts the attention from practical problems of social reform, no longer exists.

Mental activity and creative tendencies. — A political and social revolution is almost invariably accompanied by a revolution in the mentality and the conceptions of the masses; old habits and traditions are discarded; the mind has been roughly awakened from the stagnation of routine that usually prevails in settled conditions of life. Thought becomes free and active and assumes an attitude of rational criticism in respect to the events of life. The criticism may not be very deep, or well founded; but nevertheless the process of independent thought will be put in motion and old conceptions and ideas will be remodelled. A similar evolution of thought is now developing in Russia; naturally the process is especially palpable among the «brains of the nation», i. e. the Intelligentsia.

The necessity for creative activities is one of the most prominent feature in the new mentality of Russia's population. This active attitude has caused many of the problems that arise in the soul of the nation to be solved by new expedients. The expedient may be false and temporary, or it may be wise and lasting, it is often harsh and cruel, but it indicates the

effort to create conditions in which regeneration and growth are to take the place of decay. Such efforts are on the increase; they attain their maximum in the case of the Intelligentsia and are the expression of a sound and healthy reaction against the prevailing corruption and ruin. When tendencies such as these exist, the nation cannot perish, for the capacities of regeneration and expansion are still alive. The greater the mass of the population that such tendencies embrace the greater will the regenerative force be. The main problem lies in the question whether such tendencies exist, whether they are broadly developed, and whether they are sufficiently intense.

I am best acquainted with the peasants and the Intelligentsia. In both social classes the existence of a creative effort is almost universal. In the former class it finds its expression in the desperate desire to ameliorate the conditions of husbandry and in the sorrow of the peasant for the damage done to his farming. In the spring of 1921, I had a long talk with a peasant farmer. He concluded his story of the peasants' woes by the words: «Honestly — the farmer is starving for proper work. Everyone is longing for better times; we are greedy for work. Give us liberty, free the land and the peasant from the chains imposed by «comrades» and Russia will be smothered in corn. The land must not be forced on every one — only good farmers must get it. The country's prosperity lies in the land; the interests of the entire population demand that the land should be made to yield the utmost. I think that a minimum of labour should be fixed; he who does not fulfil the minimum, loses his land. This is no play; it's work, earnest work, on which the existence of Russia depends. Once you are on the land, you must give the land all your strength and take everything you can from it».

I draw the reader's attention to the last words, to the conception that conditions in which the land will yield the utmost are imperatively necessary. One constantly meets with this idea

among the peasants; it is shared by peasants and the Intelligentsia alike.

I have close connections with agricultural, co-operative, political, industrial and publishing circles; I am acquainted with members of the Zemstvos. They are all in the same condition — «outwardly dead, at heart alive»; *an intense desire for creative work exists everywhere*, coupled with the absolute conviction that productive effort is impossible whilst soviet authority is in power. The desire to work is so great that in some instances it forces honest and certainly not communistically minded people to join the communist party, in order to find scope for productive and cultural work.

The following facts prove an intense craving for creative effort on the part of the Intelligentsia: during January 1922, the establishment of 146 private publishing firms was authorized in Moscow alone. As long as the Soviet government is in power the bare existence of these concerns will be no easy matter. The same striving is apparent in innumerable conferences, large and small, legal and secret, that were held during the winter of 1921 by members of co-operative societies who strenuously investigated every chance for a successful effort to better the economic condition of Russia. Secret conferences of business men and industrial captains also took place continually. The results of all this were meagre, but as an indication of existing energy and desire for activity they were significant.

The increased appreciation of education.— I have had occasion to speak (chapter on Culture) of the more propitious attitude adopted by the population towards education. Such an attitude is typical both for the peasants and the Intelligentsia. The former consider education mainly as one of the principle aids to personal success in life; the latter regard it as the primary condition of a development of public life. The attention of the Intelli-

gentsia, formerly engrossed with public and social institutions, is now centred on the human personality; for the influence of the human personality on the character of the public and social structure of the community is more important than the influence of established institutions on the personality. Hence, the increased attention paid by the Intelligentsia to the problem of education.

The same attitude towards education is not entirely alien to the peasants' mentality, as is evident from the much quoted sentence given earlier in this book: «If we were educated, do you think the bolsheviks would have had power over us»?

Novel conception of the state. Increased value is being attached to another side of public life: to a normally organised and well functioning system of government. Anarchist negative tendencies in respect of the state never have existed in Russia, either in the Intelligentsia, or in the masses of the population, although the general attitude in this question was an irresponsible one. In contemplating and participating in the revolution, neither the majority of the Intelligentsia nor the masses of the population ever troubled about its effects on the State. In the former conditions of a firmly established governing authority and a well organised State, there were no reasons for the question to arise, as, similarly, there was no reason to think of measures for strengthening the Government's authority, or for preventing the disruption of the Commonwealth. The experiencies of the revolution have made the population readjust its views, and increased value is set upon the role of the State. It has become obvious that when Government authority ceases to act, the entire public and social fabric of the Commonwealth in all its various aspects collapses. The conviction has been formed that normal conditions of social life are only possible within a normally working State.

The question of the *unity* of Russia is also regarded in a novel light. I must add that my information on this matter is limited to that part of Russia which is inhabited by Great-Russians. In 1897 they formed 44.3% of the total population; now the proportion is not less than 50%. As a result of the civil wars that split Russia into different parts, *the vital importance of Russia's political unity is firmly established in the minds of the population.*

The experiences of the civil wars have made even the uncultured peasant masses realise the importance of Russia's unity. If the northern territories are lost, the supply of fish, that forms the staple food in several provinces, ceases; when the Caucasus is cut off no oil is available, and therefore no light; without the Don basin, no coal, and industry stops. During our many travels in Russia, both myself and my friends have had occasion to notice the altered attitude of the peasants on political and economic questions. On frequent occasions the peasants themselves ridiculed their own former conceptions. They would recall the phrase, very popular among the peasants during the cessation of hostilities and the disorganised demobilisation: «We come from Tambov (or Viatka, Kalouga, Vologda (1) as the case may be), the Germans will never reach us». What the peasants say now is: «The Germans may not come to us but they will get us all the same. If they don't actually reach us, they will harm us right enough. All the territories in the State are tied together; it is like the front — if the position next to ours is taken by the enemy, you may not receive a single shot, but you've got to retreat all the same».

However, the progress made by the peasant masses in these matters should not be overestimated. The masses are still very elemental although not to the extent they were.

(1) Different Russian provinces.

The feeling of patriotism has also considerably increased among the Intelligentsia. Formerly patriotism was not a marked feature of the class. The word «patriot» always implied a tinge of sarcasm. The ideology of the majority of socially active elements in the Intelligentsia was full of plans for the welfare of the world, but it troubled very little about Russia herself. *We were bad citizens for Russia, because we were too much the citizens of the world.*

This attitude towards Russia is now altered. The word «Fatherland» has become full of vital significance. In all social problems Russia comes first. The political and economic decay, the losses to culture, the policy of foreign Powers, the feeling of national shame have engendered a sentiment of love for and *close relationship* with the Fatherland. If I had to give an answer to the question as to what force still keeps the Intelligentsia in Russia active and alive, what is the most burning problem of its life — I should say unhesitatingly: «*Russia and creative work for Russia*».

Attitude towards socialism. — The decrease of socialism and its fascinating ideology forms the last of the general traits in the altered psychology of Russia's population. Many instances prove that such is actually the case.

The numbers of the partisans of socialism have dwindled both among the Intelligentsia proper and the peasant Intelligentsia. The attractions and fascinations of Socialism have considerably weakened in the mass of peasants and workmen, and a clearly defined hatred to socialists is now apparent; the animosity that never existed before has now spread to co-operative circles as well. The doctrines of those socialists, who still regard themselves as such, have undergone considerable modifications: the blunt and drastic attitude of intolerance towards the bourgeois State and economic organisation and the bourgeoisie

itself has completely vanished. Socialists of the old type naturally still exist in Russia, but they certainly do not constitute a majority. The greater part of the socialists among the Intelligentsia belong to the new type whose characteristics will be given in the next chapter.

The reader must not think that the decrease of socialism and the animosity it now meets with in the population is unexpected or inexplicable: the gruesome results of bolshevik experiments, based as they are on fundamental socialist doctrines could only influence the population by freeing it from the «fascination of red inventions».

After four years of revolution, Russia has become less socialistic and more «bourgeois» than before; the «Utopias» of former days are now forgotten. On the other hand, more attention is given to the actualities of life; its demands and achievements are better understood, and the significance and progress of events are grasped more clearly.

II.

THE INTELLIGENTSIA.

The term «Intelligentsia» has hitherto been generally used to denote an educated social group that subsists on mental work, and includes active politicians as well as men who stand aloof from public matters. When the former were referred to, the words «politically active» (1) would be appended to the term «intelligentsia». The present chapter will treat of the latter only as I have given all I had to say about the new psychic developments of the intelligentsia as a whole in the preceding chapter.

The number of the politically active intelligentsia has greatly decreased in contemporary Russia, obviously because of the mortality caused by famine, disease and executions, and owing to emigration. But three other reasons have been of still greater importance in severing the intelligentsia from public life: (1) the unprecedented hardships of material existence that exhaust a man's strength, (2) merciless ruling terror that compels anyone who would give his energy to public work to be prepared to lay down his life as well, inasmuch as *any* form of political activity may lead to death, and 3) the spiritual crisis that has affected almost all the ranks of the intelligentsia and occasions a strenuous revision of former creeds and opinions, paralysing

(1) Throughout this chapter, the term «intelligentsia» will mean its politically active part only.

active political initiative for some time to come. The number of politically inert people has greatly increased amongst the intelligentsia left in Russia. A number of provincial towns, formerly pulsating with public interests are now politicaldeserts.

The actual state of former political groupings. — As a result of the mass demobilisation of the politically active intelligentsia, all the liberal parties have completely vanished. Individuals have doubtlessly survived; it may well be that their number has even grown, thanks to the extensive political re-groupings that are now taking place, and the constitutional-democratic party will, most probably, develop into an important political influence later on — but at the present time the constitutional-democratic party is non-existent. (1)

The People's Socialist Party is also no longer an active agent. At no time could the party boast of much influence beyond a restricted circle within the intelligentsia and now it is daily losing even those members.

Monarchist groupings stand out in favourable relief to the inactivity of liberal parties. But monarchist centres can claim adherents only amongst part of the officers' corps. As far as I am aware, they possess no civic organisations of any extent or importance and would find it difficult to create any, so completely have all monarchist tendencies been swept out of intellectual circles by the latter years of the Romanovs' reign. Barring some former cabinet ministers, whom I came across in prison, I have met hardly any monarchists in Soviet Russia and have heard of none.

The Social-Democratic Party has preserved some of its organ-

(1) Constitutional-democratic party (K. D.) was the most influential party in the 1st and 2nd Doumas and included the cream of the intelligentsia, with such eminent men as Milioukoff, Nabokoff, Roditcheff, Maklakoff. (Publisher's note).

isations but is split up into two halves with an impassible barrier between them. Parallel to the official S.-D. Party which represents the *opposition — not to, but of the Kreml*, and therefore protests as a hanger-on to the bolshevist coach — three exists a group of S.-D. «Activists» who dispose of a considerable degree of influence among the S.-D. intelligentsia. The Activists have declared war to the death on Soviet rule and purpose to overthrow the latter, repudiating any political compromise with the Kreml government. Nevertheless, the Moscow group of Activists, the richest of all in educated adherents, manifests hardly any activity whatever and is in practice so extremely passive that its very name sounds ironical. A series of provincial branches has really taken an active part in the struggle; their political standpoint has not vented itself merely in discussions and cogitations within a limited circle; they have exerted themselves to attract the labouring and urban population.

The official S.-D. Party enjoys some popularity amongst the workmen, but in its quality of a bolshevist hanger-on it can hardly expect to lead the labouring masses, not to mention any other layer of the urban population. The fact that it is permitted, now and again, to publicly criticise the doings of the government enhances its influence, for in contemporary Russia any voice raised in opposition to Soviet rule is certain to be listened to. This happened in the case of moderate and extreme Social-Revolutionists, of Anarchists, of «The Workmen and Peasants» Socialist Party. In a country doomed to silence every independant and audible utterance creates a sensation.

A few restricted organisations of the Social-Revolutionary Party still exist, but of all the Russian political parties it is the one that will emerge from the Revolution with the heaviest losses. It will never regain the position it occupied in 1917. The

party has achieved its primary object and seems incompetent to grasp the new conditions and requirements of present-day Russia.

The Social-Revolutionary party formerly pursued two objects: the overthrow of Tzarist autocracy, and a fundamental agrarian reform by the annulment of private possession of land. The party has proved itself consistent, valorous and determined in the fight that entailed both sacrifices and heroism at the time. It could pride itself on men, vastly superior to the general run, and deservedly attracted a large following in the ranks of the intelligentsia, the workmen and peasants. The triumph of the party in 1917 was no mere stroke of chance.

But matters have changed since then. The destructive part of the programme has been fulfilled: Tzarism and the former system of gentlemen landowners have vanished to return no more, whilst the party has failed to realise a further object, that was tacitly implied in both the first ones — a stable political organisation, in correspondance with the requirements and mental level of the population, and settled forms of land-tenure, did not follow. Not only has the Social-Revolutionary party not manifested any aptitude whatsoever for constructive work, but even its former valour seems to have deserted it in the face of the new tyranny. Perhaps the party may still contain latent forces and energy, but latterly it has rather hampered than furthered the conflict.

The old habit of opposing reaction from the right led the party to call for armed resistance against it in Siberia and Southern Russia, whilst producing nothing but words to counteract the unprecedented tyranny that came from the extreme left. The «Petitioning Campaign» the party inaugurated in 1920 was truly amazing: the peasants were urged to affix their signatures to a series of communal decisions, drafted by V. M. Chernov, and, as would have been correct under a constitutional government, to address them to the «authorities», whilst the time

chosen for this proceeding was the very instant when the bolsheviks had doomed entire provinces to starvation by starting their cruel food-tax campaign, when whole villages were being destroyed by artillery fire and the peasants were arming in masses.

The intelligentsia is now leaving the party in great numbers.

Most of the re-groupings of political parties and the formation of new ones, inevitable after the cataclysm that has revolutionised Russian life, is centred around the peasant class, taking place in its name and for its benefit. The peasantry have best withstood the general ruin and now, like a powerful magnet, attract the wavering point of the intelligentsia's compass. The importance that the peasants have acquired in contemporary Russian life has been shown in the first part of this book; it is a natural consequence that the efforts of the intelligentsia should centralise around the peasantry.

Peasant political groupings. — We shall now examine the new political groups in process of formation around the peasantry, their ideology, programmes and tactics, but it will be difficult to characterise them fully as they are still in a period of transition and possess no organisations. They can, therefore, only be roughly and broadly indicated.

Notwithstanding the effort of the intelligentsia to form a single Peasant's Party, it may safely be affirmed that two at least will come into existence. I have already met with the elements of both in Soviet Russia. One of them strives to encompass the entire peasant class; the other, the labouring peasantry only. The first does not look beyond the social structure of a present-day bourgeois state, the second seeks to express those social forms that must some day evolve out of the existing ones. The first, accordingly, considers all social ideology as useless, the second takes it to be indispensible. From the idea of the socialisation of land that lately fascinated the

Russian intelligentsia, the first party veers over to the institution of unlimited rights of private property; the second strives to find a medium way and thinks that neither wholesale socialisation, nor the unmitigated principles of Roman land-tenure would suit the vast immensity of the Russian commonwealth. It comes to the conclusion that the adequate solution of this most important problem ought to be based on the principle of a regional settlement in accordance with the historic origin of local agrarian customs and with the prevailing type of organised undertakings.

In politics proper the former group tends to strict centralisation whilst the latter upholds the principle of broad local autonomy, that would verge on a federative system for some parts of Russia. Both parties consider the peasantry as a class apart, — not to be fused with the proletariat — but whereas the first would render the state subservient to narrow peasant class-interests, the second aims at a broader comprehension of those national problems that are common to all the social groups of the country. The first party may ultimately support the scheme of a peasant dictatorship that would always be foreign to the mentality of the second one.

So far as a prognosis on the future development and activity of both incipient parties is possible, it may safely be conjectured that the first, backed by the wealthier peasant farmers, will assume a bourgeois character. The second, leaning on an intermediate, poorer layer of the peasantry, will retain its socialistic ideology even if it renounces the appellation. Both, nevertheless, whilst recognising the importance of the state, of local self-government and co-operation in the revival of Russian industry, look on private initiative and enterprise as a basic factor without which the reconstruction of Russian economics would be an impossibility. In the one as in the other, the striving for a rapid revival of Russian industry will vastly predominate

over the tendency to equality; but the problem of distribution, entirely waived by the first group, continues to occupy the second.

As the second party is more congenial to the intelligentsia, far greater numbers are joining it, whereas but few adhere to the first. When I left Russia, the second group was also the most active; it possessed organisational nucleus in villages, district and provincial towns of several provinces. Its political standpoint is more defined; it responds better to the mental crisis of the socialistic intelligentsia and to the drift of its seekings after new forms of life and new answers to everlasting problems.

The import of these new mental currents in the intelligentsia affiliated to the second party, is far greater than the significance of the new political party itself, for the same currents are dominant amongst those of the politically active socialistic intelligentsia who have not joined any peasant party and shew but small interest in politics. In the outlines of the new standpoint that I am about to sketch, there are many traits typical of the Russian socialistic intelligentsia as a whole, inasmuch as the major part of the politically active intelligentsia — generally the most virile and energetic — was entirely socialistic. The socialist intelligentsia had a far greater influence over the workmen and peasants than the bourgeois (1) intelligentsia ever possessed, and if the former never did and possibly never will hold a position of supremacy in the central government, it will most likely retain its ascendancy over the lower classes. Such a state of matters devolves from the preceding course of Russian public life and I doubt whether even the Revolution will effect any drastic changes. The influence of socialism is weakening in Russia and may continue to decrease, but it will never be a negligable quantity; therefore the reader

(1) Liberal and democratic parties. (Translator's note).

must excuse me if, in the chapter devoted to the politically active intelligentsia, I deal almost entirely with new mental currents in socialist groups only.

Distinctive traits of the new ideology. — The group of the intelligentsia I am now going to examine call themselves socialists, but decline to vest their ultimate political ideal in a socialistic structure of society. They consider that no socialistic form succeeds in embodying the ultimate expression of the evolution of humanity, being either too narrow, rigid and evanascent, or — as an immediate practical end — too general and meagre in concrete detail. They look on socialism as on a regulative principle, now greatly marred by ineffectual attempts to render it applicable and place it on the order of the day. Socialism is not an end, but a means...

The members of the intelligentsia who adhere to these tenets call themselves «evolutionists» in theory and «reformists» in practice. They are advocates of gradual progression in political and public life and consider that, when the population has the means to express its will and aspirations through legal channels, revolutionary methods ought distinctly to be avoided.

The class construction of contemporary society is accepted as an incontrovertible fact, although the antagonistic nature of class-interests is acknowledged and the consequent necessity of independant political and economic organisations for each class recognised. The distinctive features of a class are to be sought both in the distribution of material goods and in the sphere of their production. Whilst the existence of antagonistic social classes is fully admitted, inter-class interests as well as those common to all classes are kept in view. Finally, the socialist theory regarding the moral and politically educative virtues of class war is totally rejected. The cultivation of class hatred is not only foreign to the new ideology, but abhorrent to it. A

future, better state of things cannot be brought about by destruction and enmity; a creative effort must be made to attain it — i. e. new and higher principles have to be systematically and consecutively infused into political, economic and mental life. Super-class (national) interests are vested in the state.

The primary function of the state consisted in the preservation of general and, later, personal security. Even this limited function was a super-class one and all the further developments of the state until it rises to the stage of a cultural entity are vital for all classes alike. Personal and civic rights, sanitary welfare, the increase of productive forces, education, insurance of every kind — all these are of vital importance to the entire population.

Consequently, future political activity is postulated within the limits of the state and in conjunction with that of the government.

But notwithstanding the prominence the state acquires in the new political ideology, social progress is not conceived as emanating from the government alone; it must be achieved by a free creative effort of the population and its social groupings, in such organisations as e. g. the co-operative and professional ones. Any interference on the part of the government in this sphere would be more noxious than salutary by tending to weaken or paralyse the initiative of the members. The directing governing activity that influences and transforms public life must be complemented by the free constructive efforts of the nation in correlation with its perceptive powers and the degree of civilisation it has reached. A better social status can only ensue when the human material itself has risen to a higher moral level — if men do not progress, neither will their social relations.

The social relations of any given historic period and their corresponding institutions are the outcome of the measure of

social development that obtains in the country — i. e., of the prevailing economical and educational level, organising capacity, beliefs, customs, emotionality and so forth. In particular, the «bourgeoisie» is not the originator of the present order, but merely an involuntary result.

Such a conception excludes any attempts at arbitrary and sudden alterations in the existing social order on the part of a powerful governing apparatus. The bolshevist experiment renders this position unassailable.

Although the new ideology allows for an inverse influence — i. e., that of public organisations, on an individual, it considers the second distinctly less important than the first.

All these considerations tend to give a far greater prominence to questions of education and instruction than has hitherto been the case. Inasmuch as a larger part is allotted to the human personality in public affairs, the task of preparing the individual for his future activity must preponderate over that of attempting to create a perfect social order. Educational problems must be brought to the front and they cannot be limited by the establishment of a system of universal, free, lay and similar schools, neither can the problem be entirely entrusted to the government — the initiative of the population itself must be stimulated to take part.

Owing to the present class formation of the social order, a public man finds it imperative to take as his basis a certain class of the population, the character and interests of which he uses to attain his political aims and objects. Amongst the three distinct present-day classes — the bourgeoisie, proletariat and peasantry — the new Russian political parties seek to found themselves on the latter for the following reasons:

The whole of the labouring peasantry is upon a uniform level in its distinctive class features of production and distribution of material commodities, differing sensibly in this respect

from the other two classes. From the bourgeoisie, by the character of a peasant's income and labour; for whilst the bourgeoisie, as a rule, embodies an initiative force of centralised production, the peasants include their individual physical effort in their contribution to national economics. From the proletariat by a vast difference in their relations to productive processes in general. The latter are the hired workmen in an undertaking they do not possess — the peasant farmer owns his factors of production. In the workman's case, the organisation and initiative are given him by the owner and his responsible managers, whereas the peasant unites all the three forms of productive energy in his person and applies them on his farm.

The peasants being a labouring class, their interests coincide with the objects of the intelligentsia to protect the rights of labour and reform the existing social status in its benefit. The narrow-minded assertion that the peasants will never accede to a socialistic point of view — the rights of property being «the holy of holies», the motive principle, of their activity — and that their productive processes are refractory to co-ordination — all this is amply refuted by the results of elections in various countries and by the development of the co-operative movement in general, e. g. — the co-operative butter makers of Denmark, the wine producing companies of France, the German cattle-breeders, the co-operative «electralnys» of the Czechs, controlling unions in many lands, etc. Only those who wish to be so are blind to the fact; and even if co-operation and co-ordination did encompass but a part of the peasant's activity, the new ideology does not look on the socialisation of national and peasant economics as on a concrete final end, but conceives the process as a regulative one. Reality may differ from theory in many respects; men are still too inexperienced in the tendencies of social phenomena to lay down hard and fast rules for the future.

The peasant's way of thinking, caused by his environment

and type of labour, is also congenial to the new political tenets of the intelligentsia.

In his triple aspect of proprietor, organiser and labourer the peasant values the normal working of the state. Any perturbation of the regular order upsets his affairs and he is not given to revolutions, unless when hard-pressed. In national life, the peasants are like the ballast in a ship and have often been abused for this steadying quality by hot-headed revolutionists; but the events of the last four years, showing how, in several countries, the peasants were the salvation of the ship of state from devastating bolshevist waves, have led the intelligentsia to appreciate such a peasant ballast at its full value. For Russia, at any rate, it will be indispensable for many years to come.

If the peasants are antagonistic to revolutionary methods, they are neither conservatives, nor inclined to reaction. Their proximity to nature and intimate acquaintance with natural processes makes their psychology an evolutionary one and, when once they are organised, will be a beneficient counterpoise to the unbalanced nature of the proletariat. Class hatred is not strong amongst the peasantry and their share in the class-war is not great in comparison with their participation in co-operative constructive efforts. The activity they displayed in this respect may be directed into the sphere of their public and cultural life, for the field of activity in these realms is boundless and the only danger is that others may take the lead and that the peasants' sympathies may turn to men of narrow minds and limited outlook who foresee no further development of mankind and merely aim at lulling the masses to sleep. This has been the case more than once with the peasantry of various countries and the danger is no less to-day. If the broad-minded, politically active intelligentsia leaves the peasants to the care of clergy, landowners and government officials, the steadying ballast may well turn into something more like an embargo on the ship.

The intelligentsia itself conceives its most important problem to reside in co-operation with the peasants for the following reason: as the strength of a chain is tested by that of its weakest link, so the level and standard of public life is determined by the least advanced class of its population, provided that class be in a majority. Consequently, the peasant class would be the one to correspond to the new ideology and, on the other hand, to find satisfaction in it.

It may be doubted, notwithstanding, whether the intelligentsia was primarily prompted to turn to the peasants on the ground of any abstract theory; the growing importance of the peasants in economic and public life, (see the first three chapters) their political awakening, manifested in their staunch resistance of communist rule, their widespread tendency to form a political party of their own — all this naturally drew the intelligentsia to the peasants and raised the hope of organising them into a future political force for the welfare of Russia.

In 1920 such hopes rose high. They were discussed in all educated circles, not excluding those whose contact with the peasants had hitherto been of the slightest. When I left Russia, hardly any other subject was broached, but, unfortunately, the old story all over — much said and little done. Once again, socialists were almost the only ones to dare and do, liberals lacked courage and experience to enter into direct relations with broad masses and participate in the risky organisational work.

To conclude my characterisation of the new ideology I shall add a few words on the tenor and form of the impending work amongst the peasants.

Whilst striving to form a Russian peasant party that would be a decisive factor in Russian politics, the intelligentsia cherishes no illusions concerning the actual public capacities of the peasants. Herzen's words: «a primeval force on a primitive stage of development» still fit them as before. They may be likened

to a mine that has yet to be opened before the ore can be extracted or smelted. The task of fusing all those innumerable scattered villages, farms and settlements into a cohesive political unity is, indeed, a titanic one. After the fall of the bolsheviks it is quite probable that the peasants may stand out as a dominant force in the Russian political desert, but this force will be an unconsolidated, unwieldy and dark one. The arduous mission of infusing light and cohesion into the mass, of raising it to a higher level, must devolve on the intelligentsia and the educated upper group of the peasantry itself. The intelligentsia understands and is ready to shoulder the burden with all its ramifications — cultural, educational, economic and political.

By the means of a system of political, co-operative and cultural organisations, intimately connected between themselves and reaching down to the smallest of nucleus in each village, the peasants' initiative and self-help must be stimulated; civilisation, hitherto concentrated in the cities, must be diffused over the countryside and modified to suit the requirements of the latter. Only when this has been achieved can the peasants adequately fill that post in the Russian commonwealth that is theirs by right of numbers and national importance; only then will the peasants become what they ought to be — conscious, active participators in the life of the nation.

Such, in general terms, is the duty the intelligentsia conceives it owes the peasants and — with as well as through them — the work it would accomplish for the reconstruction and weal of the Russian commonwealth.

Simultaneously with the movement of the intelligentsia towards the peasants, a corresponding inclination may be observed on the part of the latter. The currents have already met. I shall examine the second one in my next chapter.

III.

THE PEASANTS.

In this chapter I am concerned solely with those new modes of thought and action that are distinctive of the peasant class alone. The changes in the mental attitude of the latter common to other classes of the population as well, have already been indicated (see chapter I, part II). The typical features of the peasant's new psychology characterise him in his capacity of an agriculturalist and a citizen.

In examining the new economic standpoint of the peasants, their relation to the agrarian problem must be dealt with apart, for that relation will be the crucial problem of the future economic life of Russia, as the national question of her political existence. Although the data at my disposal is, unfortunately, far too scanty to elucidate exhaustively the opinions of present-day peasants on the matter, I consider it nevertheless my duty to state the little I know in view of the supreme importance of the subject.

Another section of this chapter ought to be devoted to the actual position of the peasants in its political, civic, economic, cultural and legal aspects. But as these points have already been discussed, I shall not refer to them again.

The new economic psychology. — A distinguished Russian agricultural specialist, A. P. Lochvitzky, published an article in the «Viestnik Selskago Hoziaistva»(1) defining the influence of the year 1918 on agricultural and public life. The author considers the salient feature of the year to be the general gravitation of village farmers towards new agricultural methods and their strenuous efforts to acquire the requisite practical knowledge. Agricultural advisers were appreciated as never before. It was no longer the adviser who sought out the peasants, but vice versa, «The peasants are willing to disburse any amount for an experienced agricultural adviser», writes A. A. Novikov on the ground of his impressions in the province of Vologda. The same is affirmed by agricultural advisers of the Kostroma district. All note an intensified demand for mineral manures, agricultural machinery, a tendency to resort to advanced methods of cultivation.

The peasant has now turned his attention to sources of income he has hitherto neglected. An expert on pasture-land in the province of Kostroma states that: «Requests for advice on the draining and cultivation of marshes and pasture-lands flow in from all sides. It can positively be affirmed that the stage of experimental farms is over; the bulk of the peasantry are setting out to improve their pasture-land themselves».

Experts who have investigated the state of affairs in the Western and North-Western parts of Russia come to the same conclusions: the agricultural adviser is now a popular personage; many farmers are deeply absorbed in plans for bettering their farms and have turned to books on the subject. «Taken to learning», say the peasants.

The same still obtains in 1919. Professor A. G. Doyarenko, of the Moscow Petrovsko-Razumovsky Agricultural Academy,

(1) «News of Village Husbandry». (Translator's note).

speaks in the same sense at a meeting of the Moscow Society of Village Husbandry in December 1919. «The peasants are strenuously on the search for ways and means to raise the productivity of their farms. Present circumstances are adverse, but, as soon as order is re-established, these tendencies will be realised in practice». Such was the tenor of the Professor's report.

All the information that reached me from the furthest ends of Russia — from Siberia, the Urals, the Northern and Central provinces — during 1920 and 1921 corroborates the opinions referred to: the peasant longs to set to work, his hands are itching for it, but circumstances, due to the policy of the ruling power and to the general state of ruin, compel him to remain in idleness. There is no possibility of doing anything now.

Prisoners of war, returning to their native villages, generally began as drastic critics and reformers. Occasionally they would succeed in getting a different type of house built, or the cattle-shed replaced by a warmer one and so forth, but after a time, the grim reality of Russian life would quell their ardour. It was only too obvious that no efforts could avail.

Agricultural experts, assembled at a general conference of agricultural advisers (afterwards closed by the Government), noted many indications of an immense future development of husbandry. «If only the freedom, necessary for creative and untrammelled work were granted, Russia would be unrecognisable in ten years'time»...

Another fact, conclusive for the trend to progress of peasant husbandry, was the number of the agricultural co-operative associations that sprung up in the villages in 1918-19. But they also were doomed to failure. They have practically vanished at present and no movement amongst the peasants is any longer apparent, although, during the period of my service in the Commissariat of agriculture in 1921, a considerable number of peasants would

still be delegated by their respective village communes to obtain books on agriculture. The importance the peasants now attach to agricultural science is confirmed by the Educational and Cultural Department of one of the big Co-operative Unions of Moscow. Requests for books and lectures on agriculture were continually forwarded, notwithstanding the circumstance that the members of co-operative societies of the Moscow province, forming an overwhelming majority in the union, never subsisted exclusively on agriculture.

I can unhesitatingly affirm that the demand for technical literature on the part of the peasant will, in the future, be unprecedented.

In a paper, read by Lednitzky, formerly a Russian and now a Polish public leader, the author presumes that Russia, after the fall of the bolsheviks, may be seized by a «passion for labour» and rapidly recuperate her economic losses. I have shown Lednitzky's presumption to be already a fact in the peasants' minds and I say still more: the enthusiasm for labour will manifest itself not only in actual work, but in a creative effort also. If the peasants continue in their present intentions, they will resume their normal life with a final rejection of old and a strenuous striving after new methods of agriculture.

Peasant opinions on the agrarian question. — As I have already observed, the materials at my disposal are too incomplete to allow me to characterise, fully and exhaustively, the evolution that has taken place in the peasants' minds concerning the most desirable form of land-tenure. Personally, I have come to the conclusion that *the principles of private property have gained in strength amongst the peasantry during the Revolution.* My conclusions are founded both on the direction a peasant's mind is bound to take under the conditions imposed by soviet rule, and also on a consensus of facts. Nevertheless,

the latter do not seem to be finally decisive and make me hesitate as to the absolute certainty of my deductions.

Notwithstanding the chaotic fashion in which the agrarian question was solved by soviet authorities, their legislation reflected almost all the leading ideas of the then popular theory of socialisation of land; — i.e.: every man has the right to claim a portion of land, provided he cultivates it himself, and — the transfer of land by sale or purchase is prohibited.

A universal and equal distribution of land was never effected on an All-Russian scale, but within the limits of village communes — occasionally even throughout a sub-district — it would be strictly applied on the estates that had fallen into the peasants' hands. Neither was the right of every man to hold land fully realised, although all those who could and did prove their connexion with a village commune profited by it. The prohibition of trading with land was also ineffective, not through a fault of weakness in the soviet government, but because the sale and purchase of land cannot be stopped by any laws, however stringent. The principle of a labour tenure of land likewise suffered many exceptions, but this was bound to occur under any rule, even under a social-revolutionary one, and in spite of them it may truly be said that a labour tenure of land will remain typical of the revolutionary period.

The right of claiming land, combined with a shortage of supplies, drove such elements into the country as had long since given up agriculture, or had never been connected with it. The number of those casual farmers was very great. The majority of them had fled from the cities, whilst a considerable contingent was made up of persons who retained their posts in industrial undertakings and in the Transport Service. They were inefficient farmers and generally tilled only a part of their allotment, letting the rest lie fallow after the first year. However, they kept a firm hold on the land «in

case of future emergencies»; no one would consent to waive his right. The farmers were indignant and wrathful; according to village standards, these «new-settlers» «messed» the land instead of cultivating it. The diminished harvests infuriated the peasants and suggested the plan of fixing by law a compulsory average standard of productivity.

Besides the townspeople, soldiers also proffered their claims and received satisfaction.

During these latter years, the human current has been steadily flowing into the villages. In combination with the principle of an equal apportionment of land, it led to a yearly redistribution of the available arable land, wholly or in part. Manuring, even in its present limited extent, was totally abandoned: the thought that another might reap the fruit of his labour in the following year discouraged the peasant. The frequency of redistribution of land can be inferred from a decree, forbidding it for nine years at least. The decree of the 30th of April 1920 proved insufficient and had to be reinforced in 1921 by an enactment of the All-Russian Executive Committee of the Conference of Soviets.

These combined influences led to an increase of uncultivated areas and a diminution of the productivity of peasant husbandry.

The burden of a socialistic system of land-tenure was further aggravated by communistic experiments of the ruling power, e.g.—(1) compulsory community of village husbandry, (2) steady encouragement of agricultural collectivist associations, to the detriment of individual undertakings, (3) socialisation of agricultural implements and machinery, when the machinery and tools would be collected and stored together, or, as happened more frequently, the owner would be forced to hire out his implements to those who needed them on terms invariably ruinous to himself, (4) redistribution of seeds, (5) State regulation of the area of cultivation and the proportional quantity of the

various cultures, (6) compulsory methods of cultivation as e. g. early spring sowing, levelling of knolls and clearing of shrubs from meadows and pasture-land and so on.

Peasant farming lost its stability with the freedom of estimating, planning and organising. An intense hankering for «freedom of labour» naturally followed, with a profound hatred of the government, and also of the entire system that resulted from a collective ownership of the soil. A tendency to fly for refuge to detached farms and small allotments appeared, an issue was sought in the private possession of land. The peasants began to break away from the old communal order and to leave the villages with the object of settling in detached collectivist or individual farms.

Early last year I had a long talk with N. S. Bogdanov, chief of the Management of Soviet Estates in the Commissariat of Agriculture. My interlocuter occasionally wrote in the «Economicheskaya Jizn», partially adhered to Soviet economic policy and was considered «one of our own people» in the leading circles of his Commissariat. He was well informed upon the work of the Commissariat of Agriculture and the actual conditions in the provinces. To my question, whether it was true that the principle of private property was frankly gaining ground amongst the peasantry generally, Bogdanov replied by a long statement of facts. I took the more salient ones down in writing and give them here.

«The tendency to move to detached farms is dominant everywhere. It is especially noticeable in the provinces of Orel, Moghilev, Gomel, Moscow, Tver, Kaluga, Riazan, Smolensk, Vladimir and part of Yaroslav. In certain sub-districts of the province of Orel almost all the villagers have migrated to farms. The peasants get hold of a land-surveyor, give him a plot of land, cultivate it for him, pay him hundreds of thousands of roubles, feed him and set him to «cut out land». Afterwards they trans-

fer their homesteads into the allotments, although this is often put off until «better times». The surveyor is occasionally arrested, but his profession being a legal one in the Republic, he is generally released. The peasants settle him once more on his plot and he continues to «cut out land»... In the latter half of 1920 an exhaustive article by Berzin, Director of the Agrarian Department of the Commissariat of Agriculture, marks an intensified tendency amongst the peasants to settle in small units; large villages are transformed into a group of smaller ones and the land belonging to them is correspondingly divided. The majority of the settlers form collective farms and transfer their homesteads to them. A cursory inspection of such a group of farms shows that they are generally the handiwork of the richer peasantry and as they are quite opposed to collective farming, these farms are nothing but a species of camouflage. The farmers work as private owners. At a first glance, no fences or walls will be noticed and a common barn and cattle-shed are apparent. But a more attentive survey discloses a tall pole in the midst of the houses, in the very centre of the estate, and small posts on its boundaries. If a line is mentally drawn from the pole to a boundary-post, that line will indicate one of the internal boundaries of the collective farm. Further investigation will show that ploughing is the only work fulfilled in common, all the rest is done individually, within the imaginary internal boundaries: each family threshes its own corn in the barn and looks after its cattle in the shed. The semblance of a collective farm lies before you, but the reality is a conglomerate of private farms, merely awaiting the first propitious occasion to throw off the fettering collectivist mask».

My interlocuter's statements were afterwards corroborated in respect of two of the provinces he had mentioned: the fact was confirmed in Kaluga by agricultural advisers, whilst a member of the Provincial Agricultural Department at Gomel

regarded the prevailing tendency to break away from the village commune as the main cause of the marked development of a collectivist-agrarian movement in the province.

In one of the central provinces that still clung to the communal order in the early months of 1921, the different forms of land-tenure were debated by some typical representatives of the educated peasantry at a series of conferences. The members were all intimate friends, sharing the same political views: almost all had lately belonged to the socialist-revolutionary party and had worked together in the co-operative movement. Dissatisfied with the present agrarian system, some of them had resolved to move to detached farms, but before putting their plan into execution they wished to consult their friends. Hence the conferences, in which the question was broadly formulated and hotly discussed. Although no unanimous conclusions were arrived at, the majority expressed themselves in favour of private possession of land and small-holdings.

The proceedings at two other similar conferences, also in one of the central governments, that met during the summer of 1920, are still more characteristic. Members of a group of «upper» peasantry had met to dicuss the ways and means of organising a peasant's political party, and debates on an economic and social programme stood on the order of the day. In a gathering of about thirty members, all of whom were active public men in their respective villages and of whom most had belonged to socialist political parties, the principle of the ownership of land was voted by a majority of 90%.

The fact that peasants will trade in land in the provinces of Kaluga and Penza likewise proves their intention to hold it on the title of private property.

Only one article in the foreign Russian press on the subject of contemporary agrarian tendencies amongst the peasantry, has come to my notice. It is written in the form of a letter from Rus-

sia in the «Volya Rossyi». Three extracts from it follow: «The village Andreanovka, Novotorjsk distr., Province of Pskov, a large one for our region (68 homesteads), introduced, with the assistance of the agricultural adviser, an advanced and systematic method of cultivation in 1908-9. In 1911 the village staunchly opposed the plan of agrarian reform (1) and retained its communal order. The village is fairly rich in agricultural machinery and is considered one of the most advanced in the district. At present the same peasants who fought the agrarian reform of 1911, implore their agricultural adviser to devise a way that would allow them to work independently and as they think best»... The importance of this communication is enhanced by the circumstance that the village community in question is an exceptional one in Russia — and even in such conditions, the communal system hampers the initiative of energetic farmers».

«There are about 16 collective farms in the district of Novotorjsk; for the most part they are nothing but a convenient pretext for active farmers to break away from the village commune. The farms that were organised in 1918 are splitting up into small holdings».

«A widespread, deep dissatisfaction with the communal order must be noted and taken into account. Efficient farmers (and every farmer has the potentiality of an efficient one in him) tend to isolate their farms from the rest... At the very first opportunity, the villagers will parcel out their land into small holdings».

As the reader may see, this article confirms the data I collected in Russia. Individualistic tendencies, always strong in an oppressed people after a revolution, are particularly vigorous in contemporary Russia owing to the amazing attempts of the government to socialise peasant husbandry. Both these

(1) Stolypin's plan of small holdings. (Translator's note).

factors have developed an intense and powerful desire to command a maximum of independence in agricultural activity. And, inasmuch as the stronger the personality, the greater its tendency to be an autonomous agent, I presume that the most advanced and developed class of the peasantry will be the first to reject the communal system. This happened in many localities after the revolution of 1905-7 and it will be the same at present on a much vaster scale.

But I must also note some opposite impressions derived from adherents of collective-labouring forms of farming. I received them from members of the best agricultural and co-operative associations of Russia. My friends, who had raised the standard of efficiency in their association to an exclusive level of supremacy, were partisans of communal land-tenure and of collective organisations of labouring husbandry. They admitted, however, that these forms were as yet above the capacity of an average farmer and could hardly be generally recommended. Judging from my intimate knowledge of some of the members of the association, I am persuaded that if ever they resume individual farming, they will be the first to insist on small holdings — their initiative would be cramped in a village commune.

In another instance my informant was the instigator of a most interesting attempt to create an agricultural association comprising the entire village. At first all the villagers agreed to join, but when they heard that the authorities intended to turn the association into a collectivist commune, the majority drew back. Upon that, the initiator began to persuade individuals to combine, but the peasants assembled the village moot and prevailed on my friend by saying: «You know what the times are like... we ought to stick together; if one of us leaves to take a small holding, another joins your association and a third remains in the village commune, what will become of us? If you can get the communists not to molest your association, we shall

all join, but let no one do so now. Don't break up the village commune. If we are divided amongst ourselves, we are lost». There was no desire to migrate to detached farms in the village because of «the times», but my friend asserted that in three of the six villages he was well acquainted with which consisted of 319 homesteads, there was a movement in favour of detached farms; nine families had already migrated, while two more were busy with preliminary arrangements. Thus eleven families, or 3.4%, had elected to work on small holdings.

Once more I repeat that *the idea of a private ownership of land on detached farms is gaining in strength.* The two things are logically unconnected, for detached farms and the private possession of land may not coincide, but they are one in the mind of the population.

The political life of the peasantry. — The peasants are, at the present time, indisputably the most vigorous political force in Soviet Russia. In no other class of the population has the stimulating influence of the Revolution had such visible and strong effect. Whilst the majority of the intelligentsia merely mocks and grumbles bitterly, or, at the best, abuses soviet rule in offices and among friends, whilst the workman revolts spasmodically and timidly, resorting mainly to resolutions or short-lived strikes, whilst the army, evidently anti-bolshevist, rebels only occasionally and in small units, the peasants are engaged in a continual and desperate struggle. The terrible retaliation, whole villages burnt and destroyed by artillery-fire, mass executions, tortures, violent ejection from the homes of their fathers, confiscation of property, vengeance on hostages — nothing deters them from the stubborn fight.

The peasants express their resistance to soviet rule in three ways: by armed insurrections, legal opposition and attempts to form into stable political organisations.

Armed rebellion is the prevailing type of the peasants' resistance. It is offensive and defensive, guerrilla warfare and mass movements. The operations of the passive «*Greens*», their efforts to preserve the regions they inhabit from falling under Soviet rule, are typical of the peasants' defensive tactics.

The Greens never attack. Refractory to military service, they fly to the forests and live there. They repulse the onslaughts of bolshevist troops with determination and valour and shield their families from the penalties decreed against relatives of deserters. If the property of a partisan is confiscated, or his family seized as hostages, the Greens immediately swoop down on the homes of local communists, setting them on fire and ruthlessly slaughtering the inhabitants, aged and infants alike. This system of «self-defence» has rendered the application of savage decrees almost impossible.

The Greens are formed into detachments with an elective commander at their head. They possess an internal military organisation, a kind of army commissariat, they submit to discipline, capital punishment is included in their code. They live in dug-outs, work in the fields with the peasants, occasionally even remain at home. There are Greens who have carried on such a mode of existence since 1919. The majority were formerly private soldiers in the army. Shortly before I left the country, I met, at my house, an officer who had commanded a detachment of Greens until 1921. He told me that the number of Greens in the province of Kostroma alone, varies from 4.000 to 30,000 men, in accordance with the severity of the measures adopted by authorities against deserters.

The second object of the peasants' defensive warfare is to prevent Soviet rule from obtaining in their localities. There are hundreds of sub-districts in populous provinces that have never submitted to soviet rule, every attempt to bring them to subjection being met with such desperate resistance, that

the troops were compelled to retreat. In other villages, where soviet detachments had got the upper hand, revolutionary committees would be exterminated as soon as the military force was recalled and the old communal authorities, reinstated. Such sub-districts, practically outside the boundaries of soviet territory, can be found even in the provinces of Harkov and Poltava.

But if soviet power succeeds in establishing itself, the resistance assumes an offensive character. The peasants rise in masses and form into bands. The latter are often denominated as «Greens», but these Greens are active ones. Widespread peasant risings of this kind bear the stamp of an unpremeditated response to predatory and oppressive government enactments such as a cruel food-tax campaign, a mass mobilisation for some compulsory labour or other, socialisation of agricultural implements and so forth.

But if peasant insurrections most often flare up in this fashion, there are plenty of them, carefully planned out beforehand. Several that I personally know of, were not the consequence of an intolerable proceeding of the government and had been previously organised. I am bound to admit that even in such a case the movement lacks any clearly defined object or systematic plan: still, it cannot be classified as a mere reflectory mass movement, for the population rises not against a particular grievance, but because of an unbearable system. The insurrection of March 1920, in the Province of Toula, that of February-March 1921 in Western Siberia, of March 1921 in the Province of Vologda belong to this type. The last rising, organised by its leaders in support of the Kronstadt revolt, was the most definite in its object. During these insurrections, popular wrath is barbarously vented on communists, supply collectors, and all who may be suspected of communist tendencies.

In February, 1921, the Chresvichaika acknowledged that

118 districts were in revolt and had seized from 12 to 15 townships. The most stubborn and lasting one was the Tambov rising; the largest, that of Western Siberia, which covered 11 adjoining districts of 5 provinces and continued for about 6 weeks. During a fortnight, Siberia was completely severed from European Russia.

These large peasant revolts are distinguished by some features, absent in the insurrections of 1902, 1905 and 1917. The Toula rebellion of 1920, the Vologda one and the vast movement that was in preparation in one of the provinces, adjoining the prov. of Petrograd (1), were organised by the peasants themselves; the intelligentsia took no part in them or, at the best, a negligable one.

The rebels recognise the importance of military technique and are slightly acquainted with its elements. They form into detachments with responsible commanders, they have a primitive intelligence and liaison service. They strive to attract officers possessed of technical knowledge. Occasionally they plan out definite strategical operations to secure an important position, such as a railway junction at Toula, the township of Velsk at Vologda or that of Hvalinsk on the Volga, where a passage across the river had been prepared for the insurgents in case of defeat. Nothing of the kind is to be observed in the earlier revolts.

Organisers of latter-day insurrections see the necessity of operating with a clearly defined object in view. Banners with appropriate slogans circulate in the area, proclamations are issued, meetings held; in the Tambov rebellion a paper was published. These attempts are illiterate, the mottoes and slogans are vague and incoherent, the political speeches,

(1) The insurrection did not take place as, on the date fixed for the commencement of operations (March, 20th), Kronstadt had fallen.

poor; but the very fact of their existence in peasant risings is the sign of a developing consciousness.

The second distinctive trait of present-day peasant rebellions is the avoidance of officers as political leaders and the unpopularity of the idea of a military dictatorship. The peasants «pity» individual officers and will protect and help them when they can, but they have refused to join an organisation of officers who were strangers to them because, as they put it: «If we are led by officers, they may again set some Kolchak or Denikin over us.»

The wide range of the insurrections, their rapid diffusion and stubborn resistance are also new. Great indeed, must the accumulated stocks of combustible material be, for the fire to spread so fast, and large the measure of hatred in the souls of the population to induce them to seek revenge on their enemies in so barbarous a fashion.

Guerrilla partisan detachments, officially termed «bands», are the third form of the peasants' armed struggle with soviet power.

Guerrilla parties are recruited from the most turbulent and unruly elements of the village population, of the lowest mental and moral type. The Great and Civil Wars have blunted the moral sense of the people and hardened their hearts; human life is now prized at a «copeck» and consequently the reserves, from which Russia draws the armed bands that overrun her, are inexhaustible. A guerrilla party can be raised anywhere and at any time.

In their reports of January-March 1921, the «Special Staff for Combating Insurrectionary Movements» in the Ukraine deals with 29 guerrilla detachments in eight provinces. The total number of combatants was 13,000; one of the detachments possessed two armoured cars. Some parties had 162 machine-guns to 6,100 men, others, armed with artillery, 37 guns to 9,100. They

disposed of extensive reserves, available at any time: official reports state that 7 detachments of 5,500 men in all were increased to 21,700 combatants for important operations — i. e. four times over. If this proportion of reservists to combatants can be applied to the 29 detachments, their total force will amount to 50,000 men.

The figures given in the report are, however, not quite final. The report mentions three detachments, operating in the prov. of Harkov, whereas the Harkov Chresvichaika estimates them at 150 in May 1921. The report estimates the active combatants of a party at 850, whilst the Chresvichaika — in thousands. And the Chresvichaika was probably better informed: a friend of mine happened to be in the operative region of a guerilla party and he watched their carts, loaded with infantry and their belongings, cross a bridge in a single, uninterrupted file during four hours. About the same time, a detachment of several hundred red cadets, armed with machine guns, was hacked to pieces by insurrectionists. Very few cadets escaped alive.

Guerrilla parties were chiefly concentrated in the Ukraine, but in 1921 they appeared in the Crimea, the Don and Kuban provinces, in the provinces of Stavropol, Voronejs, Tambov, Saratov, Samara. They are also to be found in those of Kostroma, Yaroslav, Vologda, Ufa, Altai, Tomsk, Omsk, Irkutsk, Uralsk, Astrakhan, Minsk, Olonets, Smolensk — indeed, the provinces, where no guerrilla detachments operated, will be few in Russia. During the winter they generally disperse, but spring brings them out with renewed vigour. Here, as an illustration, is the report of an agent of the Commissariat of Agriculture: «In the spring of 1921, regular work in the province of Voronejs became impossible; every sub-district had a bandit's gang of its own.» In the province of Kuban, the combatants in guerrilla detachments were estimated by the Ekaterinodar Chresvichaika to amount to 40,000-50,000.

In answer to the policy of Soviet rulers, the Russian peasantry raised an army of guerrilla fighters, always ready to go into action. Its strength cannot be correctly estimated, but is indubitably not below 150,000 men.

These hostilities are inspired by the hatred of soviet rule. Their object is to defend the villages. Townships, railway stations, trains, forage and supply stores, soviet estates, sometimes collectivist communes are attacked. Corn and forage in government stores is destroyed, distributed amongst the peasants, or carried off by the freebooters; the cattle on soviet estates and collectivist communes is led away. Railway lines are ruined, bridges blown up, military trains wrecked. Especial attention is given to punitive and requisitioning detachments; government detachments, sometimes several hundred men strong, will vanish without leaving a trace behind them. Even soviet rule, in many provinces and chiefly in the Ukraine, is limited to the towns and the vicinity of railway lines. Neither is soviet authority stable in district towns; according to the report mentioned above, 21 towns — three of them the chief towns of their provinces (Jitomir, Chernigov, Poltava) — have been repeatedly occupied by insurrectionists. In May 1921 the metropolis of the «Ukrainian Socialistic Soviet Republic», Harkov, was overtaken by panic. An onslaught was made on the country-house of the head of the government, Rakovsky, and he himself only escaped by a lucky chance.

Guerrilla detachments are generally popular. The peasants will shelter and feed them, thus solving the complicated problems of housing, supplies, transport, and intelligence for them. They escape pursuit for the same reason.

The influence of such perpetual warfare on the life of the country is naturally disastrous. Russia abides in a state of chaos, or «chronic disorder». What stability could indeed be expected, when the ruling power is compelled to rush from one end of the

vast plains to the other, busy in quelling revolts by armed force and attempting to establish a semblance of administrative order.

The peasants have often tried to oppose the communist government by legal methods, but it must be confessed that this mode of action, requiring greater organising capacities and a higher mental level than armed insurrections, met with small success. Although large regions would tend to unite, the peasants never could manage to combine effectually even within the limits of a province, whilst a district was gained only in exceptional cases. Sub-districts frequently succeeded in rejecting communist candidates, but each district acted independently. If a strong wave of opposition to communists spread simultaneously over a district, a district election would be won, but never a provincial one. The peasants would be bullied at a provincial election, the technique of proceedings confused them and a communist majority would be carried by the means of fraudulent «margarine» delegates. There is not one instance on record in which the peasants succeeded in sending a delegate of their own choice to the All-Russian Conference of Soviets.

At non-party peasant and district conferences, where less pressure was exerted, the peasants' opposition assumed a more determined character. The conference would often degenerate into a simple anti-bolshevist demonstration; communists would be received with groans, whistling and foul abuse, they would not be allowed to open their mouths. The district and provincial conferences in the Moscow province at the end of 1920 were particularly significant. The peasants would not listen even to responsible communists. The usual demagogic catchwords were drowned in derisive shouting. Several sarcastic and witty peasant utterances were heard and circulated in Moscow afterwards. An old peasant observed that, although the land now belongs to the peasants, the corn, grass and timber on it is not theirs; they

may own the rivers, but not the fish in them... The conference was closed prematurely and about 800 peasants were arrested after it.

The peasants evince a greater degree of steadfastness and organising capacity at co-operative meetings, where they achieve better results. Communists hardly ever win a contested election; if a defeat appears specially undesirable, they disperse the assembly. The peasants are generally led by educated men, the opposition acts concertedly and votes in unison, communist «sleights of hand» with mandates are of no avail. If co-operation and especially co-operative unions are given free development in Russia, they will become important organisational centres for the peasantry.

Dating from the last months of the year 1920, the peasants' opposition has increased in strength. The villages raise their voices, communist authorities are openly reviled and communist candidates thrown out of village commune soviets. At the same time, revived tendencies to combine into stable political parties can be noticed amongst the peasantry.

According to the information I received in February 1921, from the All-Russian Chresvichaika, the attention of its chiefs had been engrossed, during the preceding month, in the efforts the peasants were making to create a political party of their own. The reports of local Che-kas showed the movement to be a widespread one and to have affected such vastly dispersed regions as the provinces of Moscow, Petrograd, Vologda, Yaroslav, Perm, Altai, Tver, Kuban, Akmolinsk.

Information from private sources proved the movement to be a still more important one; it had already spread over 14 provinces and was increasing. At the end of 1921 no less than 22 provinces were involved.

The peasants also attempted to organise legal unions of a mixed professional and political character. The request for an

official recognition of such unions was proffered at the Moscow conference I have referred to, at the Vologda Conference of Soviets early in 1921 and at a series of district and sub-district non-party peasant conferences. A union of the kind was founded at Velsk (Vologda province) in the latter half of 1920; it rapidly acquired a tremendous popularity and its influence began to be felt in neighbouring districts. The authorities took alarm and dissolved the union. Its initiators were arrested, judged and condemned.

All, who have any connexion with the peasants, agree in affirming that the idea of a political organisation of their own is most alluring to the latter. The bulk of the peasantry considers it in the light of a lever to overthrow communist power, but the more advanced groups of the population look further ahead and think that its chief object ought to lie in the influence it may exert on the political life of a future Russia.

Such are the various forms of political activity, apparent amongst the peasantry of contemporary Russia. We shall now examine their new political ideology — the opinions, hopes, aims and determinations fostered in their minds by the events of the last few years.

The political ideology of the peasants. — The first deduction a peasant mind has made from the experiences of recent years is that he belongs to a separate and distinct social class with interests, troubles, friends and enemies of its own. It has been clearly demonstrated that a workman, armed with rifle and machine-gun, may turn up in a village to loot its produce, acquired at the price of strenuous efforts. When a workman has done his best to ruin industry, it appears he will set out to destroy husbandry also. Presuming himself to be a social Messiah, he becomes an oppressor and will support a government that the

peasants cannot tolerate. Peasants and workmen may have much in common, they belong to a labouring class — but the difference between them is obvious.

Although I have no positive proofs of the fact, still I remain persuaded that the peasants are also alienated from the intelligentsia because they fancy that the latter has abandoned them in this, their hour of bitter trial. They appreciate the technical knowledge of the intelligentsia more than ever, but the feeling of social relationship — never very strong — is almost lost.

The unfriendly feeling the bulk of the peasantry have always harboured towards the cities who live in lazy ease and sponge on the villages, is vastly intensified. A city builds theatres and universities, and is radiant with electric light, whilst a village, like a blind man, sits in gloom and mud, starves and dies without medical assistance. An end must be put to this state of things. The countryside must be righted and placed in a position of equality. It is also intolerable that the cities should be permitted to establish the form of government, whilst the villages look on and suffer the results.

All this is rendered still more acute by the consciousness of its supreme importance the peasantry has now gained. The peasants form the only class of the population that works and produces, all the others live on them, giving them nothing but an extra dose of oppression in return. The peasants must vindicate their rights; not the last ought they to be, but the first — and the countryside has grasped the full import of this.

But how can the villages claim their lawful rights? The answer is obvious: by the means of a stable and strong political association, capable of directing the life of the state. A new political party, that would comprise the bulk of the peasantry, middle-class, rich and poor, must be formed; and it must be an exclusively peasant party. Former political parties were unsatisfactory, distant, unfamiliar; the peasants never attracted

their special attention. And is the largest class of agricultural Russia not worthy of special attention? Or is it not sufficiently important to become the basis of a strong and influential party of Agricultural Labour?

As to the peasants' ideas on the agrarian question, the revival of industry and the future government of the Russian state, I have already indicated the trend of their agrarian policy. The revival of industry is expected to take place with the concurrence of the «owners» of factories and workshops. Perhaps, at some future day ,the people may establish factories of their own, but they cannot do so now. The owners will certainly «squeeze» the peasants as formerly, but it answers better, on the whole, to overpay the owner and get what is wanted, than to have nothing. Buying abroad will not do; in the case of war, another shortage would follow and, besides, what would become of the Russian workman? Where would the source of additional earnings for the peasant be? What would the surplus village population do? Home industry is indispensable and it cannot exist without the «owners».

I have given the ideas of the peasants as I heard them, in their original form and expressions. They are not always correct, they abound in exaggerations and contradictions, some disagree with acknowledged democratical dogmas. The task of criticising or justifying these ideas does not concern me here; they are the outcome of the collective mind of the great mass of villagers. The views of the «upper» classes of the peasantry are more complete and richer in detail, but I have not included anything that would be specific to them. The ideas I have indicated are shared alike by the intelligentsia, by the «upper» groups of peasants and by the bulk of the population.

IV.

THE WORKMEN, THE ARMY AND THE STUDENTS.

During my life in Russia my connexions with those groups of the population that form the subject matter of this chapter were but slight. The information I was able to collect about their life and the changes of their mentality was both scanty and inadequate. Being convinced that the intelligentsia and the peasants were destined to become the most important social factor of a future Russia, all my energy was turned to the task of investigating their current moods and thoughts, for therein I hoped to find the answer to the troubling question: is Russia alive? Will she recover? In spite of my opinion that the Soviets' downfall would probably be occasioned by labour troubles and brought about by the defection of the army, I paid little attention to these two social groups. Therefore my lack of material compels me to treat of the workmen, the army and the students in one chapter, notwithstanding their vastly different natures.

The workmen.— With regard to the workmen, the following two questions interested me most: the attitude of labour towards the existing government, and the ideas of the labouring masses concerning the reconstruction of Russian industry. I was curious to ascertain whether the workmen's hostility towards the orga-

nisational initiative of industrial employers still existed, or whether the attitude of labour in this vital matter had undergone a change. Would the workmen oppose the return of the «owners», or were they looking forward to it? I left Russia with a clear and definite answer to the first question and a vague one to the second. The first was given in the actual conditions of the workmen's existence, in their words and actions.

From year to year the conditions of labour were deteriorating. The political influence of labour was on the decrease, personal and civic rights were being curtailed, real wage was falling and simultaneously working hours were being lengthened in all the branches of industry. The shortage of food, clothing and fuel was ever more acute, the dissolution of industry and transport growing, whilst the government became more and more tyrannical and oppressive.

At first, the workmen considered these evils to be but temporary ones; hopes of an economic «recovery» and faith in a better future were still alive. But gradually, the natural feeling of anxiety among the working classes grew into a firm conviction of the hopelessness of their situation and of the imperative necessity of doing something to better it. As early as at the end of 1920, the flirtation between labour and communism was over and a period of open hostility had set in. The struggle, commenced at Labour Conferences, was continued in the streets.

The conference of the workmen of the engineering trade of the Moscow province, which was held at Moscow at the end of January 1921, indicated the position adopted by the labouring classes. After the conference had been opened, the first workman who spoke stated that the conference would be doomed to farlure if freedom of speech and personal immunity were not guaranteed to its members. The chairman a distinguished communist, the former president of the Moskow «Sovdep», Smidovitch, solemnly gave the desired guarantee. The workmen's tongues were loo-

sened, and excited, indignant speeches broke forth. The speakers enumerated long lists of crimes the communists had committed against the country, the labour classes, their own principles and promises. Communists were attested as liars, thieves, enemies of the people. The Speakers ended by asserting that the downfall of the Soviet régime was inevitable and desirable and the sooner this came to pass the better it would be for national economics, for the workmen and the peasants. More than once the chairman attempted to stem the torrent, but each time members of the conference cut him short with shouts of «let him go on... let him finish... You are too accustomed to meek submission... You jews!» And the orators were allowed to finish their speeches. The conference was soon closed, but it succeeded in passing a resolution that demanded the introduction of free trade and a reform of the food-tax. The Soviet press published this resolution a month later, when the Powers in the Kreml had come to the conclusion that the measures proposed by the conference were unavoidable.

A week after this Conference, a similar one was held by the All-Russian Union of Miners in Moscow. It was much calmer than the preceeding one, but in their essence, the opinions voiced by its members were very much the same as those of the metal workmen. This second conference showed that even the attitude of communist workmen towards the Government and its policy had undergone a change. 60% of the members of the conference were communists and, at party meetings, the workmen had adopted all the resolutions suggested to them by the communist «upper» circles. But now all the attempts made by the Committee of the Miners' Conference to pass the same resolutions failed: the workmen communists, having intermingled with non-party workmen, shook off party discipline and voted against the «suggested» resolutions. The reports of members on the activity of the administration were heard by the Conference with pro-

found attention, and the criticism offered was sober, restrained, but, in its essence, imbued with hopeless pessimism, bordering on despair. The key note, sounded at the conference by communists and non-communists alike, was that the position of industry was hopeless and, together with it, the labour classes were sinking both socialiy and physically; the governing policy had been disastrous and the only means of salvation lay in a drastic change.

The demands of the Conferences were of a purely economic nature; they had not as yet assumed a political character. But during the second half of February, a political attitude was introduced. Two delegates from large factories near Vologda (S. Soochona) returned from the All-Russian Conference of Paper Manufacturing Industries; one was a communist, the other a non-party engineer. A large meeting was held to hear their reports. The report of the first delegate created a profound impression, but the words of the second fairly stunned the audience. The engineer began by stating that he would only inform the meeting of the speech made at the conference by the President of the Supreme Economical Council, Rykov, concerning the industrial situation of Russia. It amounted to a bald acknowledgement of the economic dissolution of the country. Everyone, the communist committee included, was silent for two or three minutes after the speaker had finished his report. Presently one of the workmen asked the communist delegate, whether the engineer had given Rykovs's speech correctly; the communist answered by a curt «yes». Indignant speeches then burst out; they vented the feelings of bitter disappointment for unavailing privations, losses and bloodshed. What had the labour classes gained? What hope remained? The economic situation was disastrous and showed no signs of recovery. Before the revolution industry had been developing, the country growing rich; therefore, the very basis on which the Government had

been working must have been wrong. The mistake obviously lay in the fact that power was concentrated in the hands of one class, or even one party, when power should have been vested in the entire nation. The following resolution was passed by an enormous majority: «The fundamental laws of the country should be altered, the entire nation should participate in the government, and civic rights should be granted». It was decided to send the resolution to the Soviet of People's Commissars.

Similar resolutions were received by the Government during February and March 1921 from the workmen of the Ural industries. They sometimes contained the demand of an immediate transfer of power to socialistic parties, bolsheviks excluded. Some of the Ural resolutions indignantly referred to the predominance of Jews in the central and local administrative organs. In February a resolution was passed by the workmen of the Chamovnichesky district (Moscow suburb) and handed to the President of the All-Russian Executive Committee of the Conference of Soviets by a special delegation; in this resolution three definite demands were clearly formulated: (1) Re-establishment of Free trade, (2) convocation of a Legislative Assembly, (3) an immediate change in the economic policy of the State in order not to provoke aggressive action on the part of other Powers. At the workmen's meetings in Petrograd during February the slogans of: «Down with the Soviet Government!» «Cheers for the Constituent Assembly!» were distinctly audible.

As I have already stated, towards the end of the third year of Soviet rule, the attitude of the workmen towards the Government had become definitly hostile. The Government had completely lost the sympathy of the labour class, though it was precisely to this social class that the Government had hitherto looked for support. This fact was confirmed by workmen's revolts at the end of 1920 and beginning of 1921; in February they occurred in Petrograd, Moscow, the Ural, Vologda, Saratov

and, I believe, in Toula and Nijni-Novgorod. Before that, revolts had taken place in Ivanovo-Vosnesensk, Kostroma, Jaroslavl and, later, Harkov. Almost always insufficiency of food was the pretext given; but the demands put forward during the revolt invariably covered more than the Government's provisioning system. When the communists or their adherents attempted to point out to the workmen that their «stomachs» had caused them to revolt, the workmen indignantly denied the accusation.

During the workmen's revolts in February 1921 the streets of Moscow and Petrograd bore a striking resemblance to their appearance during the revolution of February 1917, They were again crowded and the same disorder prevailed; shouts of «Down with Soviet Government!» were heard and the troops wavered; occasional firing could be heard, but only communist detachments fired. The crowd shouted to the troops: «Whom are you defending? The workmen's Government? Well, we are the workmen the Government is ours, but we don't want it! Then why should you shoot?» Eventually the troops were ordered back to their barracks, as they were more dangerous to the Government than otherwise... In Moscow the revolt began by a strike at the Vtorov works, where money was being printed. A riot took place, and the troops refused to fire. A communist detachment was then sent; it opened fire and killed and wounded several workmen. In the evening enormous masses of workmen met at the Girls' Higher Schools, the University and at several railway-stations. During the next day many factories went on strike, street manifestations were organised. The workmen tried to persuade the soldiers of the garrison to join the insurgents, but the soldiers had been disarmed and locked in the barracks. They could therefore only manifest their sympathy by shouting from the windows. All the communists in Moscow were mobilised and armed; the revolt, unsupported by the troops, died down under the threat of armed reprisals by the communists and under the influence

of special issues of flour, meal and clothes to the workmen. But the complete and final rupture between the labouring class and the government could no longer be overlooked.

The answer to the second problem that interested me was not nearly so obvious. Symptoms indicating the readiness of the workmen to accept the «bourgeoisie» certainly existed, but it was impossible to ascertain how far the workmen would be willing to go, although their insistent demands for «freedom of trade» showed that a «Commercial bourgeoisie» would be welcomed. But would the attitude of the labouring classes to the «industrial bourgeoisie» be the same?

The workmen loudly protested against the «regulation» of labour with all its consequences. They demanded «freedom of labour». At workmen's conferences and meetings the speakers would revert to the Russian industry of the past, drawing unfavourable comparisons with the present. The resolutions pointed to fundamental errors in the government's economic policy and called for drastic reforms. Amongst the lower strata of workmen the opinion that life had been better when the «owners» were still there, openly prevailed. People, who have been in close contact with the working masses have noticed the expectation of a return of the former «owners».

All this indicates the advent of the day when the workmen will include the demand for «freedom of production» in their demand for «freedom of trade». Nevertheless, up to the present, this demand has not been publicly formulated and the higher, more educated group of workmen, those who take a leading part, have not yet completely lived down their feeling of antagonism to the «industrial bourgeoisie».

The present conditions have aroused a hankering for «free labour». Free labour, wages by contract and absence of slavery now appear to the populace in the light of a radiant and unattainable ideal. The mere mention of free labour makes a man

smile with joy. A Petrograd workman writes: «If I or anyone else were to enquire what the proletariat, the semi-proletarian or the village pauper, needs most—the answer would invariably be: *Free Labour*. Without it, neither the peasant nor the workman, nor the educated people will be able to breathe freely».

The army. — The major part of the Russian army is not pro-bolshevik. The army chiefly consists of mobilised peasants and its attitude towards the government is similar to that of the class the men belong to, only less emphasised and acute because of the age of the recruits and the conditions of the service. The men who have remained in the army after the year 1921 range between the ages of 20 and 24. As a peasant's individuality is seldom fully developed before he is 30, these men are still in a stage of transition and very susceptible to the influence of their environment. They easily cast aside their former interests and ideas and assume the specific psychology of a soldier.

Away from his farm, the young peasant pays less attention to the doings of the authorities and consequently, he is less hostile to them than the peasant who has remained at home, although he too, may continue to harbour unfriendly feelings towards bolshevism. Nevertheless, the mass of the soldiers obey the government and fight for it merely because they are afraid.

The discipline in the present red army is much stricter than it used to be in the former Imperial one. It is true that when not on active service or parade, soldiers and officers are considered to be equals, but, as the greater part of the army is either at the front or in localities declared to be in a «state of war», the majority of the soldiers are always considered «on active service»; this means that they are liable to disciplinary punishment (without court-martial), including the death penalty.

In the red army capital punishment is not a mere threat: during the four years of its existence, the Soviet Government has shot scores of thousands of soldiers for mere «infringement of discipline». The following is an extract from a recent newspaper: 12 peasants and 42 red soldiers have been shot in the province of Simbirsk without trial for being in possession of Antonov's proclamations. In a certain company of a regiment quartered in Moscow that I know of, eight soldiers were shot during the winter of 1920-1921 without any court-martial for a frank criticism of the Soviet régime, that had been overheard by the communist nucleus of the company.

Both these instances serve to explain a third cause that keeps the army in subordination — namely, the political secret service. The activity of the latter is great in the red army. In platoons, batteries and companies the communist nucleus acts as military secret police; in regiments, brigades and divisions, the political commissars, and revolutionary military soviets serve the same purpose. The communist nucleus that serves as the primary police organisation, consists of several trustworthy communists supplied by the party central organs (there are very few communists among the conscripts). The duties of the nucleus consist in spying on their comrades, and in periodically informing the authorities of all the soldiers' conversations, interests, friends etc. The slightest suspicion of «treason» is immediately reported to the political commissar and the suspected culprits are promptly isolated, no enquiry being held. «Isolation» usually means death; «they come in the night, wake someone and take him away», a soldier told me once, speaking about life in his company, «five men have already been taken away thus, one by one. We have had no news of them — they have completely vanished».

However, in spite of the political police, terror and strict discipline, the soldiers are continually disclosing their real

attitude towards the authorities. During the second half of 1920 an entire division mutinied in the province of Samara and the men went of to the Volga steppes taking arms and ammunition with them. The same year, in October, a mutiny occurred on the Hodinskoe Polye in Moscow. In December, the officer commanding a division complained to one of my friends that units sent to repress peasant revolts «disappear as in a bottomless pit: the soldiers either desert and join the rebels, or suffer heavy casualties owing to bad training». In March 1921 about 17,000 soldiers went over to the rebels during one of the revolts in Siberia. At the same period the authorities in Moscow and Petrograd were obliged to disarm the troops in both capitals and lock them up in their barracks, as they were openly unreliable. The Government did not dare to employ any of the units of the Petrograd garrison, except the Soviet Officers' Training Corps («Red Cadets»), against the Kronstatd mutineers, and was obliged to concentrate trustworthy troops from other towns to attack the forts. During the same month a representative of one of the provincial (anti-bolshevik) secret organisations requested me to put him into communication with the Moscow organisations. Of the 15,000 men composing the garrison in his provincial town, 6,000 could be relied upon to mutiny at a given word.

If the Government cannot trust the rank and file of the army, still less can it rely on the commanding officers, the greater part of whom are officers of the old army, as their attitude towards the Government is much more hostile than that of the soldiers. The latter usually break out in disorganised mass-mutinies, but the officers are continually organising. Their conspiracies are constantly being disclosed by the authorities and vast numbers of them are shot; but this never daunts the others. I have had information of anti-soviet officers' organisations in at least ten towns. They bear very different names («socialist», «democratic», «Savinkovs», «republican», «monarchist» etc.) but they

all have one immediate problem before them: an armed revolt against the Soviet Government. According to my information, the monarchist organisations were the strongest and they alone possessed a central all-Russian organisation in Moscow.

Except the communists, only the so called «Red Commanders» in the army sympathize with the Government; they are mostly officers trained in the Soviet military schools, but they are numerically of very small importance and cannot affect the general anti-soviet character of the Army.

The Government is fully aware of the attitude of the regular red army towards it, and, therefore, has now created units specially intended for internal police service. The red army is used against rebels in extreme cases only.

These special units originally consisted of communist detachments, foreign mercenary battalions and regiments («International units») and battalions of the All-Russian Che-ka. Later «Red Cadets» (pupils of the Soviet military schools) were used for civil war; at first only in very important cases, but as they were found to be extremely trustworthy, the number of these schools was increased and their use as a police force became habitual. Such schools exist now in all the provincial towns. Pupils are received into them only on recommendation from the political commissars, communist nucleus and communist party committees. Political police activity amongst the pupils in the schools is even more intense than in the regular units, and there are practically no «cadets» who are not absolutely faithful to the Government.

During 1920 the battalions of the All-Russian Che-ka were increased in number and formed the main bulk of internal police troops; they were at first known under the name of «Troops for Internal Service» and later as «Troops of Internal Defence». Besides these units, there now exist some super-trustworthy troops, «Special battalions of the All-Russian Che-ka».

The percentage of communists is very high in such police troops; and the Government takes good care that all communists should be thoroughly versed in the use of arms, drill and tactics. Members of the party all go through regular drill. During March and April 1920, after a series of revolts, the drill became especially intense. Whenever the authorities expect any trouble, all the communists are immediately mobilized; arms are distributed to them, they are formed into detachments and thus spend days in awaiting the enemy. Towards the 1st of March 1921, Moscow alone contained 31,714 communists and 8,100 communist candidates, that amounted to the very considerable force of 30,000 (allowing 10,000 for women members); the fighting efficiency of this army is great and it could do much towards preserving the Government in the case of an armed revolt.

In addition to the armed forces of the Soviet Government mentioned in this chapter, there is another group of soldiers that deserves special attention. The great War and the Civil Wars have created a type of professional fighters, men who make their living out of war. Such condottieri are to be found in great numbers amongst the rebel partisans in the Ukraine, but there are a good many of them in the red army also. Often it is pure chance that decides whether such a man will fight on one side or on the other.

Boudenny's cavalry is entirely composed of these condottieri. The men do not care who their enemy may be, provided they can loot and plunder someone. Their only «ideological» impulse is their hatred of Jews. The feeling is so violent and unrestrained that Boudenny's troops are never billetted in or even permitted to pass through any town in the Ukraine. Localities, visited by Boudenny's men do not easily forget those guests; the name is synonymous with that of a murderer and a robber... The troops cannot be considered trustworthy in the proper sense of the word, but as the Soviet Government is sure to afford endless

occasions of fighting and looting, the army has hitherto loyally obeyed the government and mercilessly destroyed its opponents and enemies. The government will never on any consideration bring Boudenny's army to Moscow, but it has often successfully employed it to crush and annihilate troublesome provinces.

The Soviet Government has managed to organise a fairly large armed force to defend it and coerce the country, but this army, nevertheless, will prove powerless to save the Communists from an eventual downfall, although it may help to prolong the existence of the Government considerably.

The Youth of Russia. — The recent years have left a marked impression on the mentality of the rising generation of the Russian intelligentsia, whose conscious life began during the Great War. Men who are well acquainted with present-day Russian students are unanimous in affirming that their moral and intellectual standard has suffered deteriorisation.

A lowering of the intellectual level will indeed appear unavoidable if material hardships, the irregularity of educational work, the shortage of text-books and the total absence of any literature are taken into consideration. Schoolmasters and university lecturers all testify to the sad fact that never before have they been compelled to deal with such a dull and undeveloped generation as the present youth of Russia. In practical matters, the students often evince extraordinary capacity, but the examination average of the universities is correspondingly low.

Another trait of contemporary young people is their state of depression. Boys seldom laugh and seem to look forward to nothing. The foul atmosphere, reeking with bloodshed and corruption, has crippled and stunted the boys' mental growth. Misery, want, cruelty and oppression have eaten into the very soul of the coming generation.

The same state of depression reigns amongst the boys — and their number is not small — who have been «fooled» by the communists. In the dead silence of Russian life, only the voice of the communists could be heard, and this circumstance has unfortunately proved effectual. If communists form an exception amongst adult members of the intelligentsia, they are often to be met with amongst the boys. The number of individual youthful adherents to communism has far outstripped that of the boys who officially belong to communist associations, whilst the total of the latter is not inferior to the total number of communists in Russia.

This state of things would be truly appalling, were it not for the circumstance that such youthful communists are only to be found in the grammar schools and communist sympathies vanish as soon as a boy has entered the university, where communism is intensely disapproved of. The overwhelming majority of students will simply have nothing to do with a communist. Thus two sharply antagonistic camps are formed, having nothing in common and coming into contact only when a conflict has flared up. The general and undisguised animosity of the students towards their communist comrades compels the latter either to leave the university or resign their membership of the party.

The objection of the students to communism is not limited to the walls of the university. Towards the end of May and during the whole of June 1921 a series of students' meetings took place in Moscow. The resolutions passed protested against the cruel treatment meted out to socialist prisoners in the Boutyrsky prison, demanded the release of political prisoners and the re-election of the Moscow Soviet by secret ballot. The students had planned a street manifestation against the government on the day fixed for the opening of the Third International. The Commissariat of Education, however, warned in time, closed all the universities and high schools: before the 11th of July, all

the students non-resident in Moscow, were sent out of town and many arrests were made — thus the manifestation was prevented from taking place.

Political fermentation was active among the students in Petrograd and Harkov during 1921. It reflected the general political dissatisfaction that has been rife in all the classes of Russian society since the end of 1920.

V.

THE COMMUNIST PARTY.

The Communist Party is the real supreme power in Russia. The Soviet Constitution does not recognise the sovereign rights of the nation, whilst the sovereign rights of the working classes, which the constitution does acknowledge, have been appropriated by the communist party ever since 1919 and have become a mere sham.

Quantitatively the party is a very small minority and the position of power it occupies has resulted in the majority of its members taking an active part in the administration of the country, and holding responsible posts in important government departments. According to the party's central newspaper (the «Pravda») 56% of the party participate in the Government; of these 35% are in the Soviet civil service and 21 % in the Army. In reality the percentage is much larger, as the «communist nucleus» in industry, transport, village life etc. are not included. These «nuclei» are affiliated to the all powerful «Che-ka» and have therefore boundless possibilities of influencing the activity of all the institutions inside of which they exist. The bitter hatred all classes of the population bear towards them indicates the role they play and the power they enjoy.

The composition of the communist party. — Towards the end of 1920 and the beginning of 1921 the total number

of members was supposed to be 600,000 men, as already mentioned in Chapter III on the «State». It was the total given by the «Central Committee» of the party. But upon general considerations and data published by the Central Committee in regard to separate parts of Russia (in 38 provinces towards the end of 1920 there were 214,000 members), the grand total seemed exaggerated. However, to check it was absolutely impossible, not only for anti-communists, but even for the Central Committee of the party itself.

In the second half of 1920 there was a general tendency amongst members to leave the party. In 1921, especially after the widespread workmen's revolts in February and March, this tendency grew. It was principally workmen who left the party; the comparatively small number of peasants who had originally joined, had already retired during the preceding year. Quantitatively, the party was diminishing; this was enhanced by the so called «combing out» of the party, through which, according to the «Pravda», 25.9% of its members were expelled in 31 provinces, whilst the «Novy Mir» gives 22% for 43 provinces. Towards the end of 1921 the Central Committee estimated the total strength of the party at «about 400,000 men.» But, at the same time, influential communists in Moscow considered that 250,000 to 300,000 was a more correct estimate. If we assume 300,000 to have been the correct number, then, taking the total adult population of Russia at about 65 millions, we shall find that communists represent only 0.46% of the population, or that there are 216 inhabitants to every communist.

Of whom does the party consist? Possessing the ideology and name of a labour party, it is far from being that in reality. Towards the 1st of March 1920 the Moscow Committee of the party consisted of 56% of workmen, 22% of employees, 12% of peasants and 10% of intelligentsia. But this percentage does not

represent the composition of the party for the whole of Russia. Towards the beginning of March 1922, the numbers given in a statement addressed to the Communist International by the 23 members of the «labour opposition» of the party, are 40% of workmen and 60% of non-proletarians. The non-proletarians are recruited mostly from that indefinite class that formerly produced apothecaries, assistants, clerks and lower office employees and servants.

The fact that workmen are in a minority even in the relatively small Communist Party, shows to what an extent workmen communists are outnumbered by the non-communist element in their own class. The demographical census of 1920 gave 4,775,000 as the total number of workmen in Soviet Russia. Taking 300,000 as the total for the communist party and estimating that 40% of these are workmen, we find that there are about 120,000 workmen communists, i. e. they form approximately 2.5% of the total mass of workmen in Russia. That means that there is only one communist to every 40 workmen. Further, if we take into consideration only those workmen, who continue their usual work after joining the communist party, we shall see that their number will be relatively (as well as quantitatively) even less; as 56% of the communist party are in Government service, the number of communists amongst the actual workmen in industrial concerns and factories will hardly be 1.5%.

The social composition of the party is not, however, of such importance for the future of the country, as the question whether its members are prepared for and capable of fulfilling the obligations of political life that circumstances have imposed upon them. The only answer to the question must be a most emphatic negative. It is simply impossible to conceive any body of men more unfit than the party for the role it has assumed in Russia. And this applies to the entire party,

from top to bottom; its activity is more akin to the ravings of a morbid mind, than to facts of solid life.

Owing to the communists' unfitness to rule and to their insane economic policy, scores of millions of human beings are now suffering from famine and many millions more must inevitably die of starvation. And this is so not merely because of their economic policy: their attitude towards finance, labour, co-operation, industry, education, and their agrarian policy have been no better... *There is no sphere of social life to-day in Russia that has not been wrecked, polluted and reduced to a state of chaos by the Government's activity.*

The growth of the communist party and the causes regulating the fluctuations in the number of its members, can be explained by the law of natural selection according to psychological factors. People of various mentality enlisted in the party, but only men of a definite psychological type stayed in it for any length of time. The active communist is not the ordinary, average Russian; he has his own peculiar traits, that make him a curious psychological study. Every educated and observant inhabitant of Russia knows these special characteristics of the communists; strength of will is their predominant feature, together with great self-confidence and harshness—or even cruelty. They are mentally undeveloped and ignorant and therefore complex reaction and distant future results are above their understanding; they are narrow minded and daring; they never stop to reflect or hesitate and consequently always strive to reach any object directly, resorting, if necessary, to force.

During the last four years, circumstances have made communists of many men, but few have remained communists for long. In the chapter on the State I have already pointed out the careful selection of men occupying responsible posts in the «Che-ka»; in general, this applies to all communists also.

For three years now, the party has been surrounded by the intense hatred of the population. A strong and independent character only will join the party; he must be at least strong enough to disregard public opinion as well as that of his nearest relatives.

Harshness or cruelty were equally necessary for a communist. Every man knew that by entering the party, he not only accepted the responsibility for the blood, destruction and harm already brought by the party on Russia, but that he would have to take his personal share in furthering the policy of the party, and that his activity as a communist would be fraught with pain, grief and possibly death to others. Besides a strong will, a communist must also have a heart of stone.

Force of will was particularly important. Every step of the communist government in all spheres of life met with so many difficulties, due to the attitude of the populace, the quality of the employees and the acute shortage of all kinds of material commodities, that only men with exceptional strength of character and energy could cope with them.

Access to the party and work in it, especially in an active rôle, were regulated by the law of survival of the fittest. A special psychological type of active communist was thus evolved.

These characteristic features of the communist party show that the party will not surrender power of its own free will nor consent to limit or share it with anyone. When the party has reached the end of its tether, it will not capitulate as meekly and bloodlessly as Tzarism did. The communist will fight to the bitter end.

The communist party not only possessed the qualities necessary for its firm and obtuse policy, but also had absolute freedom to carry it through; in its social activity it was unhampered by any legal authority above it. No right, other

now than the right of force existed: there was no justice, the soviets had long ago been reduced to mere screens, and the press to silence. The field was open for ignorant people to display their power. They could conceive any plan and realise it with what methods they pleased without risk or hindrance.

Moral and social degeneration of the party. — Unlimited power and the uncontrolled and irresponsible abuse of it left their evil impression on the party. The party had created circumstances that led to its own internal, moral and social corruption. Unlimited power and complete irresponsibility are factors that alone would have sufficed to destroy morally the communist party, for such conditions are fatal for any government or any man. But in Russia their baleful influence was strengthened by other causes; the war was one and the atmosphere in which the party worked another.

The majority of active communists took part in the war, whilst every communist lived in conditions created and influenced by the war.

Fighting and life at the front made violence and arbitrariness a habit, men became accustomed to the feeling of irresponsibility and indifferent to bloodshed and suffering. Practically everything is lawful in regard to the enemy during war, and especially during civil war. Three years of civil war could not fail to leave their traces on the psychology of the men who participated in it. They came out of it harsh and cruel, with accrued habits of violence and irresponsibility.

The same is true, though to a lesser degree, in regard to the communists who remained in the rear. They were all deeply interested in the war. Defeat meant not so much the destruction of their communistic oasis, as very heavy personal consequences for themselves. A victory of the enemy threatened their poli-

tical power, their prosperity and even their very existence. It was much more a fight for their lives, wealth and power, than for their ideas. The communists in the rear worked for victory no less intensely, than did those at the front. Personal danger incited them and the urgent demands of the war justified military methods of administration and, consequently, any violence towards the population. Finally, it was not only the front that fought. Life in the rear was perpetually interrupted by revolts and conspiracies. Even the remotest parts in the rear lived under conditions of war.

The psychology of the communists became militarised. The influence of the war on their mentality can be well observed by the way their speech was affected. A casual glance at any poster printed by the Commissariat of Health, at an exhibition of some educational department, the pamphlets distributed for agricultural propaganda etc., will be sufficient to show to what extent this is true; everywhere one meets with words and sentences borrowed from military terminology. Thus, for instance, doctors will form «storm battalions», an epidemic is an «epidemical front», printer workmen are «storming columns», increasing the volume of production of a factory is «breaking the enemy's front»; a political pamphlet is «a shell», an ironical article, «a pyroxyline charge»; workmen are «the labour army», the administrative directions of some civil department, «the order for battle», «the powerful artillery of labour» is used to stay economic dissolution, and even the louse is depicted as «the enemy that storms the ramparts of the October Revolution».

However, if prevailing conditions and the war produced a social degeneration of the party, the communist moral standards permitted the activity that resulted from and was shaped by such a degeneration.

As has already been pointed out (in Ch. III on «The State») communism came to power with a belief in the all-importance

of class struggle. According to the bolsheviks, philosophy, ethics, art, science, politics etc.. all bear the stamp of the ruling classes' interest and serve to further them. The new class can find no profit here and must create its own moral standards, its own science and politic. According to Lenin «Berkley, Hume, Kant, Mach, Poincaré etc. were all faithful servants of the bourgeoisie and the science they developed is void of any healthy human reason, its sole object being to keep the proletariat in slavery».

I know of no cases in which moral restraints and standards, created by the former evolution of humanity, were theoretically denied by the leaders of bolshevism, but they were never acknowledged by the latter, and were, thereby, included in the wholesale negation of the so-called «bourgeois» spiritual values by bolshevist ideology. Practically, however, the most responsible leaders of communism have continually discarded, both by word and deed, all moral standards. Lenin has openly said in one of his pamphlets: «when it is necessary, stealth, cunning, conspirative methods, concealment of truth must, all be employed»...

Although moral standards and restraint were never theoretically denied by the bolsheviks, they could be overlooked on the basis of the Marxist idea of the redeeming mission of the labour classes to the world. Marx's Russian disciples limited his idea of the labouring classes to that of the communist party only. For the benefit of humanity, and in order to overthrow the abominable bourgeoisie and install the hallowed reign of socialism, everything was permitted. Any methods and means, if they were «needed», were allowed for the purpose of attaining the greatest of all objects in the world! The party was always in «need» and therefore lying slogans were continually being unfurled by the most responsible communists. Thus communists came to power with the promise

of «bread, peace and land» and «an honest convocation of the Constituant Assembly»; heaps of children's corpses in the dens called «Children's Homes» were used as tribunes from which to shout about the enormous progress in protecting Childhood that the state had made; the havoc created in all branches of education, they proclaimed to be an «end to ignorance». The tide of peasant revolts was called the insurrection of the «peasant bourgeoisie»; according to communists the Kronstadt revolt was led by generals and reactionaries; a lockout in any country was «a victorious proletarian attack»; having changed the name of the «Chresvichaika» to «State Political Department», the communists declared terror to be ended and in 1920 guaranteed the safety of the Kuban Army, but after the disarmament of the latter they arrested the officers and sent them to Archangel, to shoot them there with machine-guns — and so on *ad infinitum*.

The consequences of such political, psychological and moral conditions on the mentality and activity of communists are obvious; moral and social degeneration were inevitable. The special features that enabled men to remain and work in the party were bound to grow to herculean dimensions, often bordering on or actually becoming pathological cases. «Sow a deed and you will reap a habit, sow a habit and you will reap a character»; deeds were richly sown by communists every day. In the conditions prevailing in Russia, habits and force of character developed rapidly. And what habits and character they were!

Unlimited and irresponsible power called forth in the men who had it, an undisguised and unconcealed feeling of their own overwhelming importance. Aware of their privileged position, they became arrogant and intolerant. An ignorant, small, insignificant man grew to think himself a god from Olympus or in any case a superman. He did not speak to an ordinary human being, but held forth to him; he never asked, he ordered

or demanded; he did not advise, but condescended to advise. Any contradiction was unbearable.

A venerable agricultural adviser, who was travelling by train as a plenipotentiary of the Moscow Agricultural Commissariat, irritated a boy communist during the journey by a discussion on religion. Having found out that the old man was not a «communist», the boy handed him over to the «Che-ka» at the station. By a lucky chance the whole affair ended in nothing worse than three weeks detention.

Intolerance has affected the internal life of the party as well: a «senior» will not listen to a «junior», a commissar despises a non-commissar, a military communist a civil one and so on. During the famous dispute about Trade Unions (in 1921) the opposite sides brandished arms: in the Armies (the Crimean and Caucasian) matters came to «Pro-Trotzky» units disarming «Pro-Lenin» ones and vice versa. To what dimensions intolerance has grown, even inside the party, is excellently illustrated by the demands of the «workmen's opposition» put forward during the same heated discussions concerning trade unions. The workmen demanded the right of «free speech at all party and fractional conferences of all the various groups of the party in Soviet institutions». The same demand was repeated in March 1922 in the Statement made by 23 communists to the Executive Committee of the Communist International.

The communists do not attempt to disguise their privileged position. The entire party is saturated with the feeling of its superiority. Thus, the communist workmen, who have settled on the land in an agricultural commune, demand, as formerly the landlords and the police, that the peasants, when meeting them, should clear the road for them to pass. «They have the landlords' horses and their habits are the same», say the peasants of the Samara province about the communists. In the Kreml, an important communist told a well known

doctor, a specialist on childrens' deseases, that she would continue to summon him for her own children after the decree prohibiting private practice for doctors had been published(1). «And if I comply with your decree and refuse to come?» asked the doctor — «Then I will fetch you by force». — «Why should I be obliged to visit your children and not those of other people?» — «Because these are *our* children», argued the lady whose mission was the immediate introduction of general equality and brotherhood into the world. Similarly in 1920 a member of the Central Revisional Commission of the Communist Party, said to one of his relatives, who was struck by the abundance of his host's meal: «But that is what we always eat». «Yet in the hospitals people are dying from hunger», the relative answered. «Well, not in hospitals for communists», replied the communist. — «And in the others?» — «So much the worse for them that they are in the others». Steklov sends soldiers to catch and kill a small dog, the favourite of a children's colony, because its bark disturbs him at night.

The consciousness of their privileged position and of their mission to the world allowed the communists to requisition dwellings, furniture, kitchen gardens (already planted), gardens, musical instruments. Their privileges exempted them from waiting in queues, from labour and transport services and gave them advantages in the quantity and quality of rations they drew, etc.

A second thing which largely contributed to the communists' demoralisation is their «economic» activity. Riches came to their hands without even the asking, and the communists did not resist the temptation. Theft is general in Russia, but, undoubtedly, the honour of being the most expert in it also

(1) Such a decree was expected on the 1st of May 1921, but was not issued.

belongs to the communist party. Not only do they take bribes, sell national property and profiteer in the food stuffs that are brought both in passenger coaches «of special destination» and in ordinary trucks (often with a military convoy), but they often simply plunder the population, confiscating valuable china, pictures and carpets. In the country and in provincial towns communists usually bought villas, houses and estates; in the capitals the money they have made is invested as a rule in jewellery. Trotzky's right hand in the Revolutionary Military Soviet — Skliarsky — has in Moscow the reputation «of the best purchaser of diamonds». The president of the Third International Zinoviev is particularly notorious; The «Posliednia Novosti» recently published that: «At the customs in Kovno the luggage of Spigelglass was found to contain jewellery worth several scores of million roubles. These, it was discovered, were the modest savings of Zinoviev and his wife (S. M. Lilina)». There is nothing incredible in this telegram... The former secretary of the Soviet of People's Commissars Bonch-Brouevitch is considered to be the richest man in Russia. Next to him comes Badaev, formerly the commissar of food supplies in Petrograd, now the president of the Moscow co-operative commune, and Steklov, the editor of the «Izvestia». The inhabitants of Moscow can give the names of some twenty responsible communists who are busily engaged in making their fortunes.

Demoralisation in the sphere of the communists' private lives has assumed striking proportions only since the Polish war of 1920. All the information that reached me during the winter of 1920-1921 showed drunkenness, gambling and sexual immorality to be prevalent in communist circles. The period when communists divorced their wives and abandoned their former families had already passed and was replaced by a new fashion: communists now began to keep mistresses. The sale of spirits was still prohibited, but in the provinces there existed the

Sanitary department and branches of the «Central department for Alcohol»; spirits could be obtained from the former «for medical needs» and for «technical purposes» from the latter. There was no shortage of intoxicants and men intrusted with the administration of districts and provinces spent their nights in debauchery.

This demoralisation in the private life of communists infected the Moscow ruling «circles» as well. Restaurants with private dining rooms where spirits could be obtained already existed, and commissars had their own purveyors of wines; on the outskirts of Moscow there was a restaurant that used to be frequented almost every Saturday by a crowd of communists and girls, with the president of the Supreme Economical Council Rykov at their head. Notwithstanding, until 1921 drunkenness was not general amongst the more educated communists. During the first months of 1921 it increased appreciably. This change coincided with the workmens' revolts and with the growth of the conviction «that the social revolution in Europe has failed», that «it is time to quit», that «the position of the Government is hopeless and its downfall imminent». It is difficult to suppose that this coincidence was accidental. With the end of the civil war, and after their failure to supply fuel and provisions, after the workmens' revolts, the communists suddenly realised the hopelessness of their position. Their morale declined and their overstrained nerves clamoured for stimulants. In the provinces the coming disaster was realised earlier and therefore the provincial communists were the first to start their «feast during the plague».

It must be pointed out that debauchery during the winter of 1920-1921 was most marked amongst the communists who had retained some ideological tendencies. Those who lacked such tendencies had already limited the quantity of spirit they consumed only by the physical impossibility of procuring more.

The social degeneration of the communist party is most prominent in the system of administration and methods of government introduced by the party. The intolerance of the communists, their militarised mentality and the psychology I have already mentioned — all this, put together, gave inconcievable results. In its methods of government the communist party stands on a par with the most perverted tyrants the world has known. The party's activity can be compared to the cruellest and worst pages of human history only.

I have already had occasion to mention the fact of sadistic insanity amongst the executioners of Russia in the chapter on the «State». To complete the picture, I give an extract from the memorandum of the Central Bureau of the Social Revolutionary Party: «In Kerensk the Che-ka executioners torture their victims by changes of temperature: first they put a man into a fiercely heated steam bath and then bring him out naked into the snow. In the Voronejs province, in the village Alexeevsk they have brought their naked victim out into the frost and poured cold water over him, turning him into a pillar of ice. In the Volga region peasants who failed to pay the food-tax have been put into a prison from which the windows had previously been removed, whilst the temperature was between 20-25° below zero. In Armavir a special device for torture has been used: a strap that encircles the scull over the frontal and parietal bones; the ends of the strap are fitted with screws which, when they are tightened, inflict terrible suffering. In the stanitsa Kavkazskaya, Kuban province, a special mailed glove with nails in it is used: when struck with such a glove the victim suffers from the blow and from the nails, that inflict small but septic wounds. Women, political prisoners included, are often given the choice either to die or to become the mistress of the executioner».

The facts mentioned above are not isolated cases. Making

ice pillars out of men has been broadly practised in the Orel province during the collection of the «Extraordinary Revolutionary Tax»; in the Maloarchangelsk district a merchant (Jushkevitch) was roasted on the kitchen range by the communist detachment for not paying the tax; to extort the food-tax, peasants in the Voronejs province have been lowered into a deep well, plunged many times into the water and then hauled out to be offered the choice of payment or a repetition of the torture. In the Tambov, Tiumen, Voronejs, Kuban and Don provinces, faulty tax payers have been brought out into the fields to dig their graves and to undress. A firing party would then form up against them and a volley be fired over their heads.

This was called a «sham execution»; the victims were left physically unhurt, but mentally ruined for the rest of their lives. Such sham executions have been employed as a method for extorting confessions in Moscow by the Moscow Che-ka during 1920.

And real executions... Is there a village in Russia where they have not taken place? The victims in any province can be counted by thousands. The number of human beings condemned to death has been so great, that rifles and revolvers were found insufficient and machine guns used instead. This took place in Archangel (1920), in the Crimea (1920), near Petrograd (1919) in Stary Oskol (1919), in Ekaterinodar (1920) and in many other places.

In the Tiumen province entire villages have been burnt for non-payment of the food-tax. In the Irkutsk, Iakutsk, and Ienisseisk provinces faulty tax payers were treated as «bandits»; their property was confiscated, relatives arrested and the head of the family executed. In the villages of the Kuban province the military detachment often began the collection of corn for the State by burning several houses at random and

forbidding the fire to be extinguished; then the inhabitants would be summoned and the commissar at the head of the detachment (always a communist) would explain that if the quantity of corn demanded were not produced at the time stipulated, the entire village would be burnt. If the population, unable to pay the tax, or goaded to madness by the communists' behaviour, attacked their tormentors, incendiary shells were fired on the village in such a way that a ring of fire whould be formed and the inhabitants prevented from getting out. The orders issued to detachments repressing peasants' revolts in the Tambov, Black Sea, Iakutsk, Ienisseisk, Kuban provinces and in the Ukraine are nauseating and sufficient to kill all faith in the progressive development of humanity.

The ruling circles of the party in the districts, provinces, and capitals, as well as the majority of members were fully aware of the savage cruelty, but accepted it calmly; if the conscience of anyone of the leaders ever revolted, it was always easily quieted by the idea of the great benefit the party was bringing to humanity — for it was in this name that all these horrors were perpetrated.

Accompanied by the groans and shrieks of the unfortunate population, and on the background of blazing villages, propaganda went on, harping on the cruelty and vengefulness of the bourgeoisie, dangling the bait of a socialistic paradise; stories were told of the cruelty with which the Paris Commune had been suppressed and incongruous pictures of the future electrification of Russia drawn.

The human soul became imbued with bestial cruelty, cynicism and falsehood. The heart ceased to react normally at the sight of violence and blood... A girl of about 23-25 brought her diary to an author in Moscow with the request to give his opinion about it. The diary was not badly written, but it was so full of horrible incidents and showed such mental degradation

that my friend had to interrupt the perusal in order to collect his senses.

The diary dealt with the girl's love for a communist. She herself was also a communist. Her sweetheart was eventually disappointed in communism and went as a miner to the Don Coal-fields. The girl was distraught with grief and felt sick of life. In this condition she got into the society of the employees of the Special Department of the 10th Army (1) — the heroine herself worked in the Educational and Cultural Department of that Army. The following is an extract from the diary: «To-day we have 30», I was told, «will you come?» «Yes», I answered firmly. Soon the motor was ready and we started. Together with the others I also tried my hand; I perforated three skulls, two of which successfully, but the brains of the third one soiled my blouse and I had to clean it there and then». That is all that is said about the excecution. The diary continues with thoughts on the beloved one and complaints about the emptiness of life. Then again: «I felt attracted to the Special Department, so I went there, said good-morning to the president and sat down. He looked at me, considered for a moment and then said very gently: «So you have tried it, have you, you miserable wretch?» «Yes», I answered, understanding that he was referring to yesterday's execution. «Well, come in the evening, we have ten to-day». — Since then I have taken part in executions almost every day». This is all that is said in the extensive and minute diary about the novel and, so to say private, occupation of a girl.

«A monster, an exceptional case!» the reader will exclaim — No; the author of the diary is far from being an isolated case amongst the excecutioners in modern Russia: from what I have heard, I know of at least ten women who have «perforated

(1) The Special Department of an Army is the military Che-Ka.

skulls» of their own free will. Amongst them is the famous Rebecca Plastinin (alias Maisel-Kedrova), notorious in Northern Russia for her cruelty, who has personally executed over 120 men and has married another executioner, Kedrov (a doctor or a barrister). I have also seen a girl executioner myself. Every two or three days she used to appear, cigarette in mouth, whip in hand and a revolver in her belt, at the Central Prison Hospital in Moscow (1919). She used to enter the ward, from which patients were taken to execution. When the terror stricken victims were slow in collecting their belongings and stopped to bid farewell to their friends or began to moan in a strange, terrible voice, she either shouted harshly at them or beat them with her whip as though they were dogs. She was quite a young woman, possibly between 20 22. When, in 1920, I told my prison companions, in the Che-ka prison about her, they informed me of two other women executioners in Moscow.

I have often heard of Back, who, for his youthfulness and cruelty, was nicknamed «the Bloodthirsty Boy». He started his career in Tomsk and was afterwards transferred as president of the provincial Che-ka to Iakutsk. In Turkestan the president of the Executive Council of the Soviet of the Merve region, Gerjot, famous for his cruelty, considered it unnecessary to conceal his deeds, and openly boasted about them. In making a new acquaintance he used to say: «I am the Maliuta Scuratov»(1) of the bolshevist government». It is due to his «work» that several tens of thousands of Kirguises left Russia and wandered with their cattle and tents into China.

To finish the picture of the communists' degeneration I give an extract from the history of the repression of the

(1) Maliuta Scuratov was the famous executioner and favourite of Ivan the Terrible in the XVI Century. — (Translator's note).

workmen's revolt in Astrakhan. This repression is well known in Russia. The following is the official version of it: «On the 10th of March 1919 at 10 o'clock in the morning the workmen of the Vulcan, Etna, Caucasus and Mercury works left their work at a given signal and gathered in a crowd. The authorities ordered them to disperse, but they refused to comply and continued their meeting. We then performed our revolutionary duty and resorted to arms».

How was «the revolutionary duty» performed?

The meeting, numbering some ten thousand workmen, was surrounded. The workmen found themselves faced by armed sailors, soldiers with hand grenades and machine guns. When the workmen refused to disperse, a rifle volley was given straight into the dense crowd. In some parts the rifle muzzles almost touched the crowd. Apparently a fight ensued, and, either because of that, or merely from a hysterically cruel impulse, hand grenades were thrown into the midst of the crowd and machine gun fire was opened.

Thousands of men fell on the ground and lay still. The noise of the machine guns drowned the moans of the wounded and cries of the dying... Suddenly, as though touched by an electric current the workmen were all on their feet and witn one rush had broken the ring of troops.

The workmen then dispersed through the town that was buzzing like a disturbed bee-hive. The wild, panic stricken cry — «They are shooting! They are shooting!» was heard everywhere. A mad plan was formed to fly out of the town — to fly anywhere into the steppes, although it was early spring and the Volga was flooded, in spite of the fact that flight meant as certain a death as staying. A crowd of many thousands collected around one of the churches; artillery fire was opened upon it; the cupola of the church fell in and the crowd, mad with fear,

stampeded like a herd of cattle, neither thinking nor knowing what it was about.

Such was the first act of the Astrakhan tragedy. Immediately afterwards, the authors of it, possibly themselves aghast at what they had done, despatched a terrified telegram to the capital about the «insurrection», asking for instructions. In answer the following telegram was received, signed by the president of the Military Revolutionary Soviet, L. Trotzky: «Repress mercilessly».

Then, the second act of the tragedy commenced. The «victors» had taken «prisoners» who had been interned in prison and on barges and steamers on the river. A general massacre of them began. They were shot down in the cellars and yards of the prisons, on board the steamers and barges the dead bodies were thrown directly into the water. In some cases, in order to save ammunition, the victims' hands and feet were tied, stones attached to their necks and they were thrown into the river alive. One of the workmen, who by a miracle managed to hide behind the engine on board one of the steamers and thus saved his life, told me that from this steamer alone about 180 men had been thrown into the river.

The communists' methods of administration and the prevailing type of active communist repulsed all the sound population of Russia and attracted the moral refuse of the country. In spite of the fact that the party was open for everyone and that it gave such political and economical advantages, only one-half per cent of the total adult population of the country adhered to it, though probably it accumulated a large percentage of the moral dregs of society.

To quote Lenin's words: «For every ten decent men the party contains, it has about ninety scoundrels». The communist press is full of complaints about the quantity of «hangers-on» the party contains; the Party Central Committee is continually ordering «re-registration» or «combing out of undesirables».

The «combing out» during the second half of 1921 expelled, according to official data, 22% of the members in 43 provinces. The reasons given vary: abuse of power, bribery, disorderly conduct, drunkenness, theft, robbery, evasion of all kinds of service, profiteering, desertion, opportunism, former service in the pre-revolutionary political police or in the gendarmerie, connections with reactionary circles, cowardice etc.

A great number of the members expelled belonged either to Soviet or communist party institutions. But, actually, the measure was applied only to such misdeeds as would formerly have been brought up before the magistrates; those which would have gone to the assizes or high court did not come within the scope of the commissions; if they had, practically the entire party would have had to be expelled. Those criminals, who had brought famine on to whole provinces, who had wasted enormous quantities of food supplies, who, had goaded the population to rebellion and consciously provoked it, who were guilty of torturing prisoners and of savage wild executions — all these remained where they were and with them, the psychology of ignorant and bestially rough men, who feel no responsibility either to the population, the law or their own conscience. The Communist Party cannot be cleaned, just as a tree which is rotting from the root cannot be cured; the only way is to cut it down.

Disorganisation of the party. — The moral and social degeneration of the communists, affected not only their administrative methods and private life, but it also led to the disorganisation of the party.

Privileged groups were formed inside the party; «upper» and «lower» circles of communists appeared and the relations between these groups became very strained.

The division into «upper» and «lower» circles was based on the difference of actual right and power enjoyed by the

various groups of the party. The difference between the members officially in power and those officially out of it, came to be particularly marked. A communist commissar is the typical representative of the first group, and a member of an industrial or village «communist nucleus» of the second one.

As a general rule, all communists were far better off than the rest of the population; but inside the party there was also a marked difference amongst them. Communists officially in the Government were infinitely better supplied, clothed and housed. They enjoyed luxuries which formerly only very rich people could afford. They had motors, horses, wine; they drank, gambled and entertained.

Theft and robbery are typical traits of the communist, but the «upper» circles always had greater opportunities for them than the «lower» ones. Generally, the «lower» circles were morally cleaner and, therefore, poorer. As the result of communist methods of administration, the «Sovbours» («Soviet Bourgeoisie», or, properly speaking, Bolshevist Nouveaux Riches) were continually springing up from the «upper» circles, but the «lower» ones produced very few.

The «lower» circles participated in the cruel methods of administration adopted by the party: provisioning, punitive and other detachments were recruited from them, and, when necessary, they shot their fellow-workmen, took part in political and provisional searches etc. However, in general, the «lower» circles were better in this respect as well, for they were not so closely connected with the Government. They were inclined to blame the latter for the heavy consequences of the ignorant and cruel despotism of the Soviet Government.

Finally, in the «lower» circles, thoughts and feelings were less centred on thirst for power and greed for riches; there was more room left for idealist tendencies and a greater

faith in the coming social Revolution with all its benefits for humanity. Hopes of a future better life in Russia as a result of the October Revolution were keener amongst the «lower» circles; they had a greater belief in the sincerity of their leaders. Often their indignation against the «upper» circles was due not so much to envy, or to the desire to defend their own rights, as to the honest faith of ignorant but sincere and idealistic men.

The antagonism between the various shades of «upper» and «lower» circles became more and more acute and obvious. However, whilst the war lasted, it was counterbalanced by the feeling of a common danger and a common effort.

Towards the autumn of 1920, the civil war was over; the communist party had come out victorious in the war it had itself provoked. The armies of Denikin and Kolchak, the Northern and Crimean fronts existed no more. At first an armistice and, later on, peace was concluded with Poland. For the first time the Party got the chance of turning to peaceful constructive work. But the day of victory proved to be a day of defeat: the process of internal disintegration gained in velocity.

The disappearance of the fronts and with them of a direct danger to the existence of the party, drew out and fanned all the smouldering animosities and divergencies which had been suppressed till then. Internal conflicts arose in the party; the roughness, cruelty and intolerance of the members made these conflicts violent ones, arms often being used to settle them. The «lower» circles were opposed to strict party discipline and to the privileged position of the «upper» circles; the military would not acknowledge the authority of the civil communists; the «Pro-Trotzky» party was against the «Pro-Lenin» one, the new members against old ones; but all were unanimous in abusing the bureaucracy, despotism and meanness of the party, although they attached a different meaning to these words.

«The party is ill and suffering from a cruel fever», Lenin

stated. Amongst the communists themselves the opinion that they could not exist without war, as war alone gave them internal cohesion, began to be voiced more frequently. A commissar of the victorious Crimean army arrived in Moscow; in describing the growing demoralisation of the army and the hostility between the «Pro-Trotzky» and «Pro-Lenin» units over the question of Trade Unions, he continually repeated: «We are lost without war».

In the provinces, the antagonism of the «lower» circles to the «upper» ones had already begun in 1920. But after the disappearance of the fronts, this antagonism assumed the nature of an open struggle. The commissars of a provincial town would motor out with girls and wine; their subordinates would follow them on lorries and catch them red-handed. The commissars stole and indulged in drunkenness; their subordinates immediately sent complaints about them to the Capital. The Organising Bureau of the Party Central Committee would transfer a particularly odious commissar to another town; the «lower» circles would immediately send a deputation to Moscow demanding that he should not be allowed promotion or insisting on his expulsion from the party.

During the whole period of the rule of the Communist Party, failures on the National Economic «front» abound, but the civil war and the blocade furnished excuses for such failures. The final victory in the Crimea was followed by loud promises of the coming «National Economic Victories» in the communist press. Severe crises in fuel, food stuff supplies, and transport during the spring of 1921 showed the worth of these promises and the hopelessness of expecting any improvement in the economic life of the country.

A wave of workmens' revolts followed.

The Central Committee of the Communist Party then attempted to raise fresh hopes of a social revolution in Western

Europe. With this object it shamelessly exaggerated the coal-miners' strike in England. Later, an attempt was made to provoke a communist insurrection in Germany. Neither of these hopes materialised. Both the «upper» and «lower» circles became definitely convinced of the impossibility of a social revolution in Europe for some time yet and understood that communist Russia would have to remain an isolated socialist oasis amid a hostile bourgeois world.

Peasant risings reached unprecedented dimensions. Then the Kronstadt revolt broke out. The nucleus of the Communist Party clearly understood that it was indispensible to compromise with the «small bourgeois» element in Russia, thereby also lessening the difference between socialist Russia and the bourgeois world. The party could only retain political power at the price of concessions in its economic policy. The «New Economic Policy» was proclaimed; the surrender of the communist positions in national economics was at first gradual, but soon ended in a general abdication of all former principles.

Many earnest and convinced communists came to Moscow from the provinces to ascertain to what extent this change in the party's policy was thorough and how long was it expected to last. They were stupefied and stunned when they were firmly told that the change was «thorough and expected to last». It seemed impossible that so much blood had been shed and the entire country sacrified for nothing! Their life's aim to be given up in a few months, when they stood on the verge of a realisation of their dreams!

The party began to dissolve rapidly. The peasants had already practically abandoned it; after the disturbances in February and March 1920 the workmen followed their example. The educated communists began to pursue one object: «to get abroad, even if only in the quality of the lowest clerk». Commissars who had made their fortune, resigned their offices and

were on the watch for the moment, when they could start their own «business». Responsible communists declined, under all kinds of pretexts, to undertake work for the party. During the mobilisation of communists for military duty, more than half of them deserted, a thing that had never happened before. When the party was mobilised to assist in the collection of the food-tax, so many members tried to avoid service, that the Central Committee had to issue a special circular, threatening deserters with severe punishment.

The feeling was general that an unavoidable downfall of the communist government was imminent. «We are holding on by a miracle», the responsible communists said. «Our only chance is our luck», Lomov remarked: «a socialist revolution may begin in England and we shall then get machines and goods. America may grant us a considerable loan.— It may happen... anything may happen, so long as one really trusts one's luck». «Everything is lost», Trotzky told Soukhanov in February 1921, «we will have to begin all over again».

Sharp conflicts also took place between the Moscow communist leaders; during the spring of 1921, Trotzky was arrested. Krestinsky had to take a rest and Tsouriupa had to resign, Educated communists speculated as to who would arrest whom, and were busily engaged in procuring false passports and reserving private rooms or flats and stealing property from the store-houses.

«It is time to quit», was the opinion of many communists. Others said: «we must hold on by all means available; everything is not yet lost, as we still hold the power ». A third group considered that the moment had come: «to defy the whole world and perish with glory». A middle course was adopted: «Compromise always and everywhere, do anything, only save the party and power».

The two objects of the Soviet Government now are to keep

in power and to preserve the communist party.But they mutually exclude each other. If power is to be kept in the hands of present leaders at the price of surrendering party principles, then the party itself is doomed to decompose internally, as it cannot introduce bourgeois principles of statesmanship with impunity; or, vice versa, the party will keep its moral integrity and lose the power it now holds. The leaders value power more than the party; therefore the decomposition of the latter will continue and it will lose its sincere adherents. This will prolong the party's rule, but its numbers are bound to dwindle, and therefore the power of the Government will also inevitably dissolve, and Bolshevism proceed to final disruption.

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